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JAN./FEB. 2025
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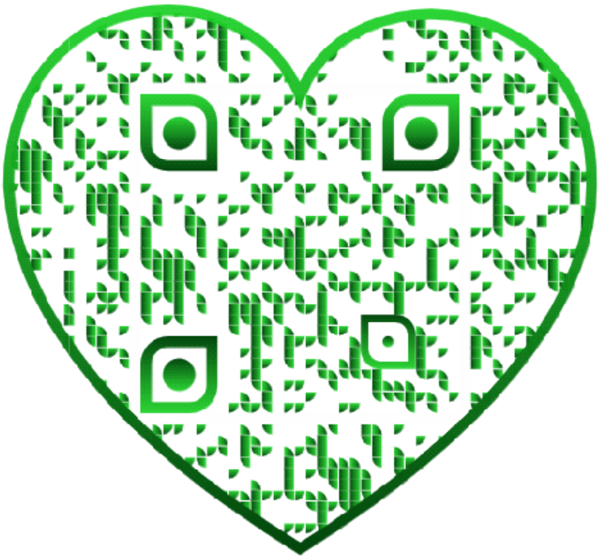

21ST-23RD MARCH 2025

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CELEBRATING OUR MOTORING HERITAGE

Good things take time, and when Arrowtown's Ayrburn winery development founder Chris Meehan was asked to be the guest judge at a Queenstown Cars and Coffee monthly meeting held at Ayrburn earlier this year, the seeds were sown for what will be an unmissable premier car event on the New Zealand motoring enthusiast's calendar.

New Zealand Classic Car contributor Vaughan Wilson, attending the event, discussed an idea with Chris and organisers Dennis Dowling and Mike Sheehan to use the venue as the home of a future annual classic car show but with a difference, to be called the 'Ayrburn Classic – A Festival of Motoring', and held from the 21 to 23 March 2025.

That idea has mushroomed into reality, and interest from all facets of classic motoring groups and the motor industry is keen.

The Ayrburn development is an absolutely stunning venue, steeped in local history, with a sophisticated vibe, and set against the spectacular backdrop of one of New Zealand's finest hospitality precincts.

The team at *New Zealand Classic Car*, Rusty Media New Zealand, is proud to be associated with the event, and we wish the organisers every success. More information is contained in the Ayrburn Classic feature in this issue of *New Zealand Classic Car*. VIP and festival day passes go on sale Monday, 2 December; visit ayrburnclassic.com.

CHAMPION RESULT

One of our better-known New Zealand Formula Ford and Toyota Racing Series drivers from recent years, Brendon Leitch, has just secured a championship GT title with Leipert Motorsport co-driver Anthony McIntosh. The pair drove their Lamborghini Huracán to victory in the Super Trofeo World GT series Pro-Am class final at Jerez, Spain, on 17 November. They recently scored a third at Bathurst in the penultimate round of the series, Brendon surprising everyone with his pace for his first time at The Mount. Well done, Brendon!

GETTING THE JOB DONE

New Zealand Classic Car contributors put in the hours to get some great stories. A recent comment is worthy of passing on, particularly as the organiser of a major event also phoned our publisher with similar comments.

Coordinator of the Pre-78 Historic Racing Saloons Wayne Perkins made the following comment which is very appreciated.

"The recent *New Zealand Classic Car* with the gorgeous 1972 Nissan Skyline 'Hakosuka' on the cover featured a really neat article about the Classic Motor Racing Club's recent Brooklands at Levels Raceway. About two-thirds of the article was about crowd favourites being the Pre-78s with our record 32-car field for our season opener. More importantly, it was both well researched and informative which was a genuine delight to see.

"I have now read the entire magazine and, being honest, I'm quite gobsmacked with it, to the extent I think it is a world-class publication with seriously detailed and interesting articles. Next time you are in the bookshop or supermarket, grab one. I assure you that you'll be very impressed with it."

Thanks Wayne, and well done Rusty team!

WHAT'S INSIDE

Honda's cheeky Civic rocked the small car market when it was launched in 1972, setting new standards of quality and comfort. In our summer cover feature, we look at a beautifully restored example.

Dave Dougherty scored Best Australian at the Dunedin Autospectaclar in October with his Alice Cooper–themed Ford Falcon XC panel van celebrating the '70s.

The format for the Ayrburn Classic car festival is set out, and we visit the amazing Chantilly concours in France and see an A35 full of surprises.

We also visit a boutique Auckland restoration company with ties to Japan, and there are also our regular columns and news events from around the country.

Enjoy, and have a happy and safe Christmas and New Year, from all of us at Rusty Media.

Quinton Taylor
Editor/Brand Manager
Email: editor@classiccar.co.nz

PORSCHE
I 356 I
Keeping the drive alive.
CELEBRATING THE FIRST RESTORATION AS
NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST PORSCHE CLASSIC PARTNER.
Follow the
journey here.
MAG19180/CC

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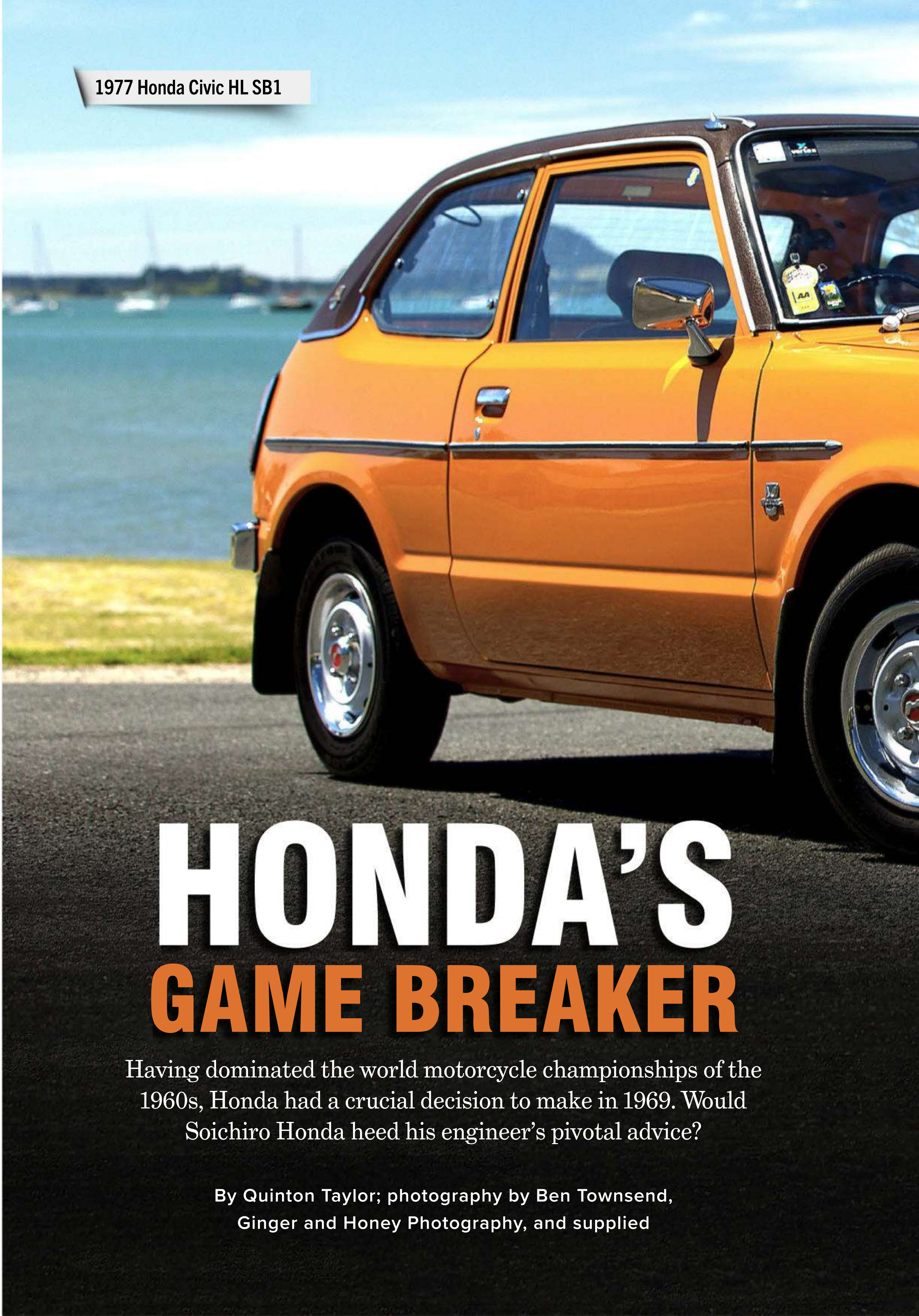


HONDA'S GAME BREAKER

Having dominated the world motorcycle championships of the 1960s, Honda had a crucial decision to make in 1969. Would Soichiro Honda heed his engineer's pivotal advice?

By Quinton Taylor; photography by Ben Townsend, Ginger and Honey Photography, and supplied

HONDA
MATIC

Very few examples of the early Civic, a car that set Honda on the path to becoming a giant of the car world, remain road registered in New Zealand.

Retired Tauranga owner of this example Graham Inglis is thrilled with his classic little Honda Civic, the first of 11 generations built by the company so far. The Civic became a household name.

"It's quite amazing the number of people who not only wave but come up to me in the street and tell me how much they like the little Honda and its colour, and then they want to start talking about it. A guy in our vintage car club wants to buy it and he has been pushing me a bit. It's not for sale," Graham laughs.

Graham bought his 1977 Honda Civic from Wellington enthusiast Julian Foster, who was the instigator of its restoration.

A COMPREHENSIVE RECORD

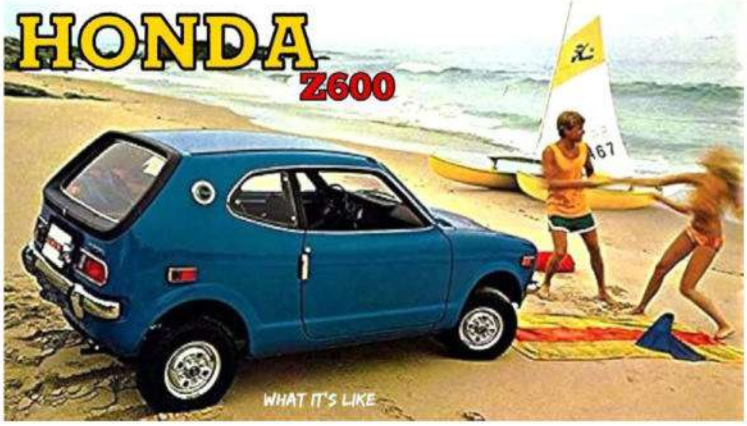
"I bought it from Julian five years ago," Graham says. "I understand he bought it off a lady in 2007, and it had been in dry storage for a few years. He told me that overall it was in pretty good order, and he gave me a file of what had been done on the car."

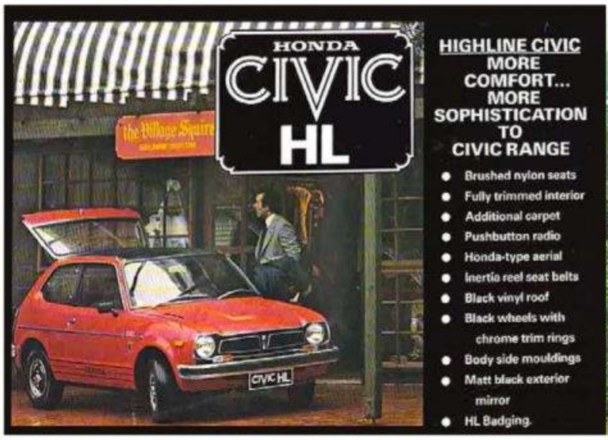
It had not been a cheap exercise, with more than $20K spent.

"It's pretty much still original, but he reconditioned the motor at about the 130,000km mark. I think the only thing I could see that had not been touched was the two-speed automatic. My mechanic tells me they are bulletproof as long as you service them," says Graham.

"Julian worked on it over a few years, and some of those years he was taking it to work. He stopped using it about 2017, as he didn't want it out in the weather. As far as I can ascertain, it has

HONDA
MATIC


HONDA
Z600
WHAT IT'S LIKE



HONDA

CIVIC

HL

HIGHLINE CIVIC
MORE
COMFORT...
MORE
SOPHISTICATION
TO
CIVIC RANGE

- Brushed nylon seats
- Fully trimmed interior
- Additional carpet
- Pushbutton radio
- Honda-type aerial
- Inertia reel seat belts
- Black vinyl roof
- Black wheels with chrome trim rings
- Body side mouldings
- Matt black exterior mirror
- HL Badging.

the Village Squire
CIVIC HL

“It’s quite amazing the number of people who not only wave, but come up to me in the street”

not had a full repaint but has been beautifully touched up. The bulk of the work was done by The Surgery in Wellington.”

As this is an HL model, it has a lot of extras – the most obvious being the vinyl roof and, inside, an overhead console and clock above the windscreen – that makes it stand apart from the more austere locally assembled models. Another item that he noticed in the car was a cassette-tape deck, and Julian said that that was a replacement for the original. Graham asked Julian if he had any tapes for sale, to which the answer was “No.” So why did he install another tape deck? Julian said because that’s what the car came with. Graham was pleased to hear that.

KEEPING YOUR COOL

As Graham ruffles through the wad of invoices, he comments, “Looking through these invoices, you can see that they have done a magic job. When it came to replacing the air-con, Julian couldn’t get an original Honda unit, and he got one out of the US. By the time he got it installed it was $6K! It replaced the glovebox, but unless you knew it, the replacement panel has been done very well and the air-con is super efficient.”

Luckily, maintenance is by a local garage sympathetic to classic cars, and, to date, the total replacement of parts has been new spark-plug leads, a brake master cylinder, and a water pump.

“Lance Ireland at RS Automotive looks after it, and it’s great to get someone who is interested in classics. He checks everything for me.”

DRIVING EXPERIENCE

“It’s a very enjoyable car to drive,” says Graham. “I don’t mind the automatic at all. It’s very light in the steering – you can drive it with one finger. I love it. It will get along at 90kph plus on the motorway with ease. I had an MG before that for 13 years. They are OK but heavy in the steering, and after 13 years I was over it. Being a drophead, it was either too windy, too hot, or raining.”

Graham takes his Honda on Bay of Plenty Vintage Car Club runs, and with two a month, the little car gets around the region.

“I don’t take it out on runs if it’s raining.”

JULIAN’S GARAGE

Julian also enjoyed his ownership of the Honda, which he says was at one time his daily driver, handling the task with ease. He is also able to clarify a couple of points for Graham.

“I think it was New Zealand new,” Julian says. “I’m pretty sure it was. I came across it on the internet and I was trying to rack my brains as to where. I think it might have been in Christchurch. I gave all the records I had to Graham, and this is all I can recall from 2007 when I bought it.”

The car was transported to Wellington and it arrived in very good order, he says.

“There were a few little spots of rust here and there as you might expect on a 30-plus-year-old car. Some work was done on it then by The Surgery. It was my daily driver for some years.

“Unfortunately, when I later moved house, it wouldn’t fit in my garage with my 1955 Isetta. My Isetta has always been my main classic car, which I’ve had since I was 19. Unfortunately, the Honda had to go.

“I totally blinged it out! There were also silver trim rings for the wheels, the bumpers were re-chromed, and panel work, which was done very well. It’s the original colour which I really liked, burnt orange. It’s a very period colour, in a good way as well.”

Interior work included refurbishing the front seats and door cards, which now look as new. Julian also experienced people reacting to the car in the same way Graham reported.

“I enjoyed driving it,” he says, “and I used to get a lot of interest. Lots of people used to stop me and say they had one, or their dad had one. I did quite a lot of mileage in it too.”

A surprising aspect that Julian clarifies relates to the Honda’s engine: “Along the way, I did put a new engine in it. It had a new engine in 2013, as it had a cracked head or a cracked block … I can’t remember. I found a new-old-stock engine over in the US and The Surgery put that in for me.”

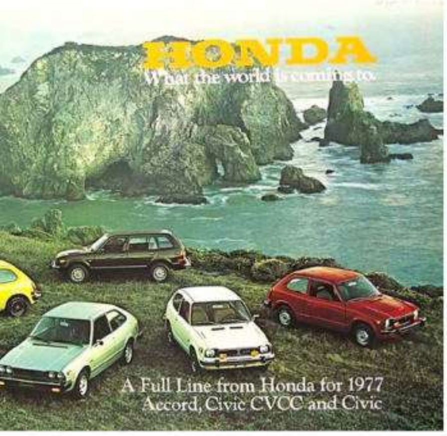
Julian is pleased to hear how much Graham is enjoying the Honda: “I’m glad to hear that it is getting the care due to it. It was very easy to drive around town, being automatic. They were pretty groundbreaking when new, and they were very popular in the US as well.”

SMALL CAR SAVIOURS

The first Honda Civics were a common sight on our roads. It was Honda’s first car assembled from complete knock-down (CKD) packs outside the Suzuka factory in Japan. Now in its 11th generation (as noted earlier), with impressive-performing models such as the ‘R’, the Civic bears little resemblance to its forebears, but it was a car design concept that changed the motor industry.

Early ’70s car design in the sub-compact segment usually equated to noisy, uncomfortable, slow, and not great value for money. If you analyse how many small cars were actually the financial saviour of car companies, there are some surprising notables.

The obvious one is, of course, the Volkswagen Beetle. BMW is another


HONDA
What the world is coming to.
A Full Line from Honda for 1977
Accord, Civic CVCC and Civic

HONDA
MATIC
HONDAMATIC

German company with its humble Isetta, which BMW made under licence, plus the pretty little Glas 700. BMW bought out Glas and it helped save the company finances in the 1950s. The Escort achieved greater success than Ford ever imagined. The Mini was a runaway success after an initially dubious public realised that it was a genius design. The Fiat 500 is another example. All contributed to overcoming the challenges of post-war recovery through a number of crises. There are many more examples.

HONDA LEADING THE WAY

Honda's founder, Soichiro Honda, had a reputation for innovation and for never giving up, developed through World War II and in the years following. He also recognised the value of filling his research and development teams with capable engineers.

Buoyed by the world championship success of their jewel-like four- and six-cylinder motorcycles in the hands of Mike Hailwood, who won five of his nine world titles on 125cc and 250cc Hondas, the company's early car designs were small and their engines and running gear were often based on motorcycle principles. From this was born the Honda Civic.

TAKING ON THE BIG BOYS

Honda's first foray into car design was almost as radical as its entry into late-1940s European motorcycle racing. It produced the tiny N360 hatchback in 1967. In line with its motorcycle marketing slogan, "You meet the nicest people on a Honda", the company was aiming to enter the lucrative small car market by attracting a younger, affluent market eager for cheap transport.

Honda developed appealing small sporty cars such as the Honda Z600 of 1970 and sporty versions of the N360, leading to an N600 version. For a time, the N360 was Japan's top-selling car. Bright colours, graphics, and cheeky sporting designs sold well.

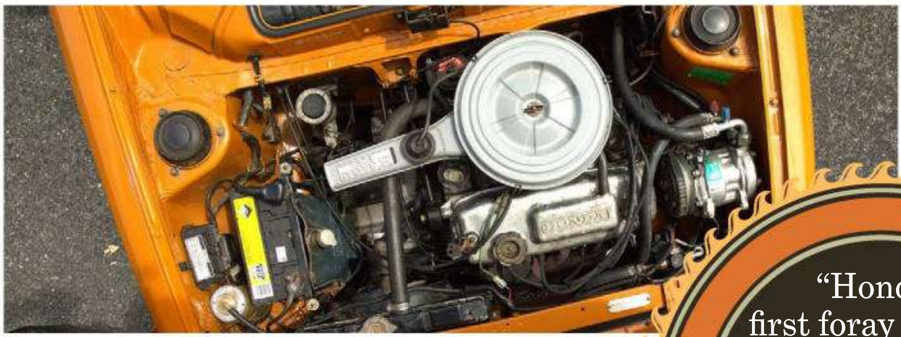
By 1962, it had introduced the complex and

HONDA
MATIC

HONDA
MATIC

> "I totally blinged it out! There were also silver trim rings for the wheels, bumpers re-chromed …"

Honda showed that it was possible to put style and comfort into a small package!



> "Honda's first foray into car design was almost as radical as its entry into late-1940s European motorcycle racing"

Mike Hailwood won five of nine world championship titles on Hondas such as this 250cc six-cylinder RC166

Paul Goodwin racing a very rare Civic Series 2 at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon

tiny Honda S360 sports car, followed two years later by the S600 and S800, but, importantly, with water-cooled engines, which opened the door to mass-market success for Honda.

Performance from these tiny cars was way beyond expectations for their engine sizes and good examples of these cars are now highly prized.

Honda saw the potential for adding to the market a real step-up in quality and performance in the sub-compact US car market.

TESTING THE WATERS

Established as a maker of small cars, the Honda H1300 coupé and sedan introduced in 1969 were an indication where the company was heading as a serious car maker, despite sticking with air-cooled engines.

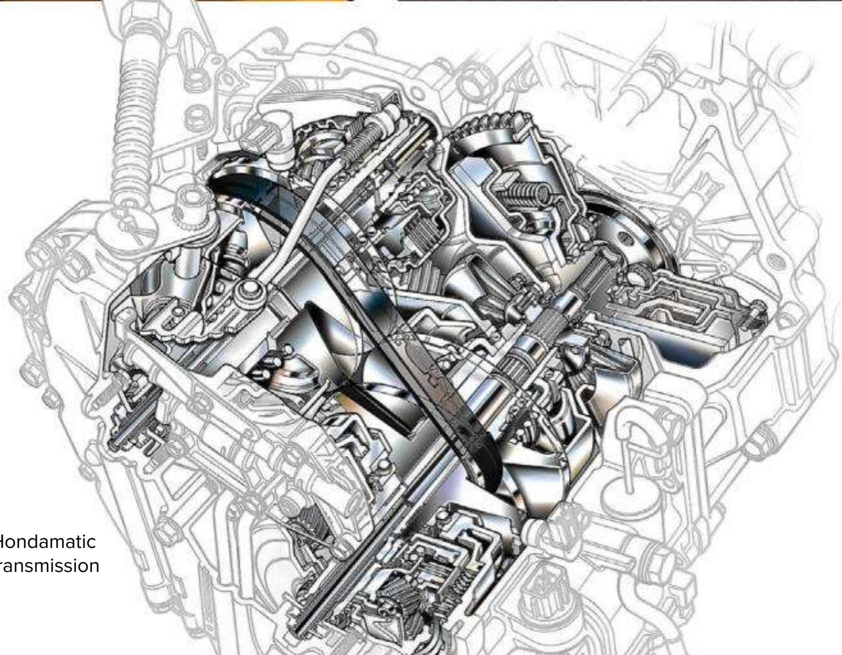
The 1300, with its Pontiac-like nose, was a stylish design. Mechanically, it owed a lot to Honda's motorcycle technology. Its engine had four cylinders, an overhead camshaft, and was made in light alloy, and it happily revved to 7200rpm, producing an impressive 110bhp (82kW). But instead of a water radiator, it was cooled entirely by air and extra oil running through a large-finned oil-reservoir tank and cooler in the engine bay. A second fan connected to the flywheel took care of cooling the finned cylinder block and head.

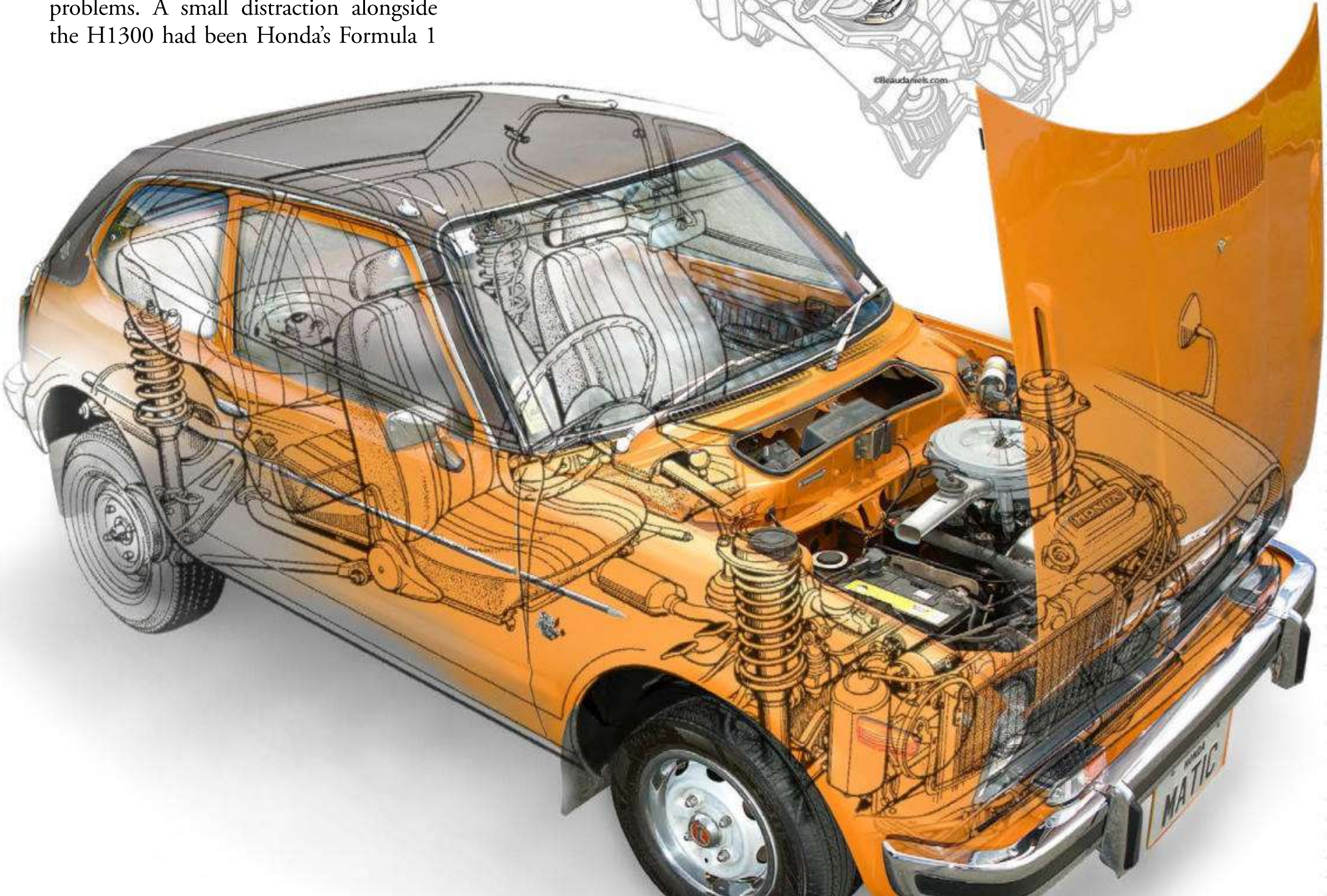
FIRST OF THE MOHICANS

It would be Honda's first sub-compact production sedan, but its development had come amid considerable conflict and daily design changes requested by Honda's research and development (R&D) centre project engineer Hideo Takeda. A novel body feature of the 1300 was that each body-side was a complete pressing, welded to a central structure. Known as the 'Mohican structure', it was a first for the industry and provided a now much more accurate and often used method of body assembly.

However the boss, Soichiro Honda, was not entirely happy with the design as the first car rolled down the production line. The gravity of the problems facing Honda and its future as a car maker came to a head with the development of the H1300. Looming problems included excessive weight, tyre wear, and meeting future emissions legislation, especially in US markets.

The issues came to a head in July 1969 as R&D engineers met to discuss solutions with Soichiro Honda. His company-wide air-cooled philosophy wouldn't work with current designs, so, with the company's future at stake, he gave permission for a water-cooled design to be commenced to solve the H1300 engine's cooling problems. A small distraction alongside the H1300 had been Honda's Formula 1


Hondamatic transmission



V12 project, also proposed with air cooling.

COMPANY SAVIOUR

The decision to change to water-cooled engines would be the saving of Honda as a major car manufacturer, and it heralded two new models, the Civic and the Life.

The new Civic hit the market in 1972, after just two years of development. It was roomier than its competitors, looked the part, and was mostly viewed as being quite a cool design. It handled better than most competitors, was well equipped and trimmed, with a comfortable ride, while its willing little EB1 1200cc (later EB2 1300cc) four-cylinder engine performed well. It was supremely smooth and economical, with a gear-box that complemented its sporty flavour.

An option was Honda's automatic gear-box, the Hondamatic, initially adapted from an automatic for CB360 motorcycles. Again, Honda defied the norm, using torque converters, and did its own thing with this transmission.

The Civic sold well in Britain and in the US, where its cheeky charm enjoyed a strong following, especially after the 1973 oil crisis, which helped sales of the thrifty little car. Popular in the US was the introduction of a Compound Vortex Controlled Combustion (CVCC) engine capable of running cleanly on leaded or unleaded fuels.

The Civic taught the industry a big lesson in how to put the best comfort, performance, and dynamics at a reasonable price into an attractive, fun package. It was a winner, at least initially.

CIVIC SCARCITY

In the US especially, salted winter roads were disastrous for the Civic, giving Honda many costly corrosion warranty problems. It would be a while before faith in the model was restored.

Graham's SB1 example survives thanks to the efforts of its previous owner, Julian Foster, and the skills of local technicians who have brought it back to the condition we see here.

There's just something about an early Civic that brings a grin to your face when you see one.

Graham's daily driver is also a Honda, of course, a 1.5 Civic turbo. Before that, it was a Honda Accord Euro, and then there was his Honda 750 motorcycle that he sold back in 2011, but that's another story. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

1977 HONDA CIVIC HL SB1
(EB2 ENGINE)

Engine	In-line EB2, four-cylinder, alloy block and cylinder head
Capacity	1237cc (1169cc for EB1)
Bore/Stroke	72mm/76mm
Comp. ratio	8.6:1
Valves	Eight, single overhead camshaft
Max. power	47kW at 5000rpm
Max. torque	104Nm at 3000rpm
Fuel system	Two-barrel carburettor
Transmission	Four- or five-speed manual, two-speed Hondamatic, front-wheel drive
Suspension, F/R	Coil and shock absorber struts with stabiliser bar and trailing links, transverse bottom arms and coil / Shock absorber struts, trailing arms
Steering	Rack and pinion
Dimensions:	
Wheelbase	2200mm
Length	3405mm
Width	1505mm
Height	1325mm
Weight	790kg

HONDA
MATIC

> "Graham's SB1 example survives thanks to the efforts of its previous owner, Julian Foster, and the skills of local technicians"

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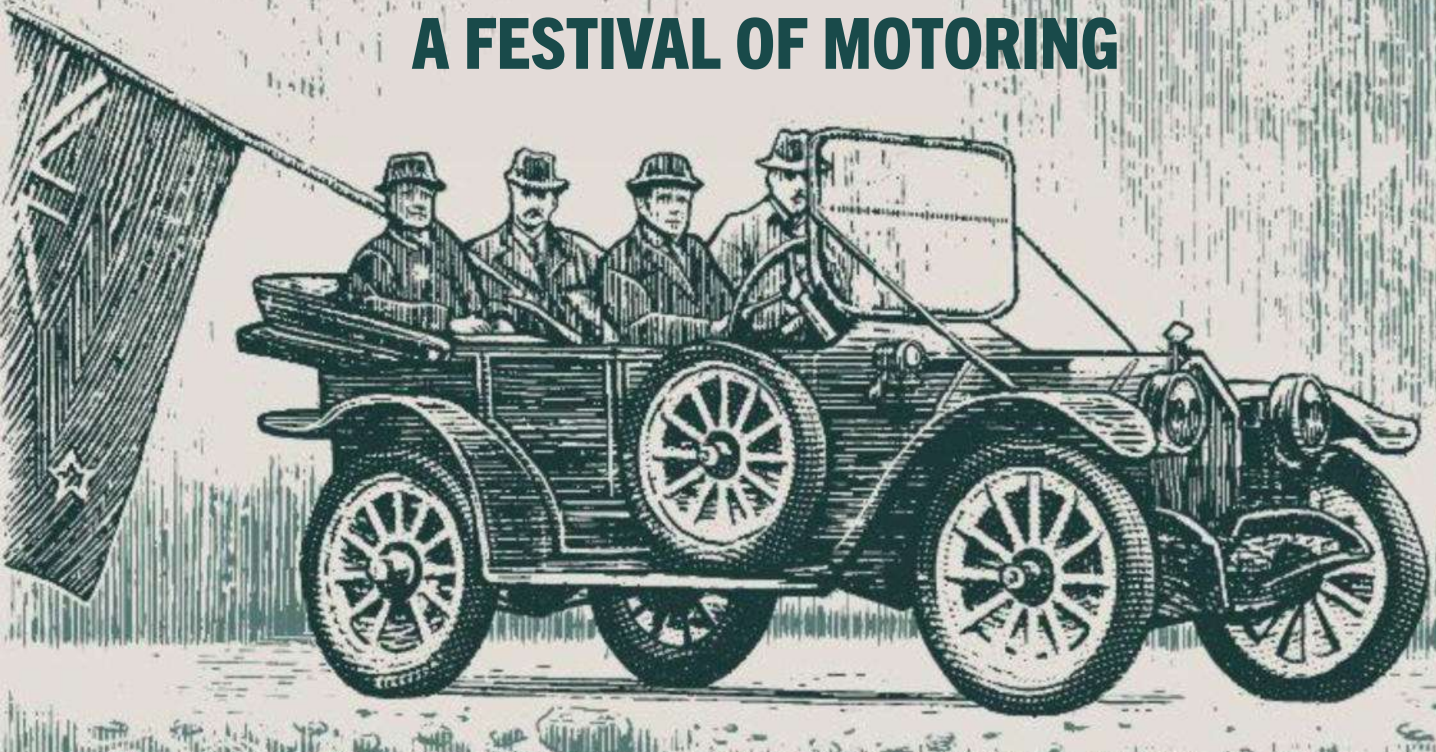


21–23 MARCH 2025

The easy rider – an Ayrburn tale

Roads are meant for cars. Today, at least. But back in 1915, the accepted wisdom was that roads were meant for more traditional forms of locomotion, like horses or well-soled feet. This modern contraption called the ‘automobile’ was seen by many as a dangerous fad or a reckless folly.

RM Paterson was not one of those people. Just like the loveable Toad in Kenneth Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows* (published a few years prior), RM was an automotive enthusiast. To say that he enjoyed the practical and recreational rewards that his Buick tourer afforded him would be an understatement.

However, RM found it impossible to bring his beloved Buick home, because Skippers Canyon Road was officially closed to motor vehicles during daylight hours. What to do? Drive the road at night and risk serious injury to himself or – even worse – his car? Or show the local powers that progress forces us to reassess everything, including the letter of the law?

No prizes for guessing which of these roads (pun intended) RM went down. He filled his car with gas, supplies, and friends, and set off down the canyon road just as the sun reached its zenith. A joyous drive through stunning scenery and a pointed act of defiance. One that would see him convicted and ordered to pay 7 pounds, 12 shillings, and 9 pence in fines and court costs. A price worth paying for the thrill of driving this scenic road and seeding the idea that maybe automobiles do belong there after all.

AYRBURN CLASSIC

New Zealand's newest motoring event, the Ayrburn Classic, continues the story of RM Paterson and his penchant for motoring and love of a good time shared with good friends.

This festival of motoring is set to become a destination event for motoring enthusiasts across New Zealand and beyond, showcasing stunning classic and modern luxury vehicles amid breathtaking scenery and a lively atmosphere.

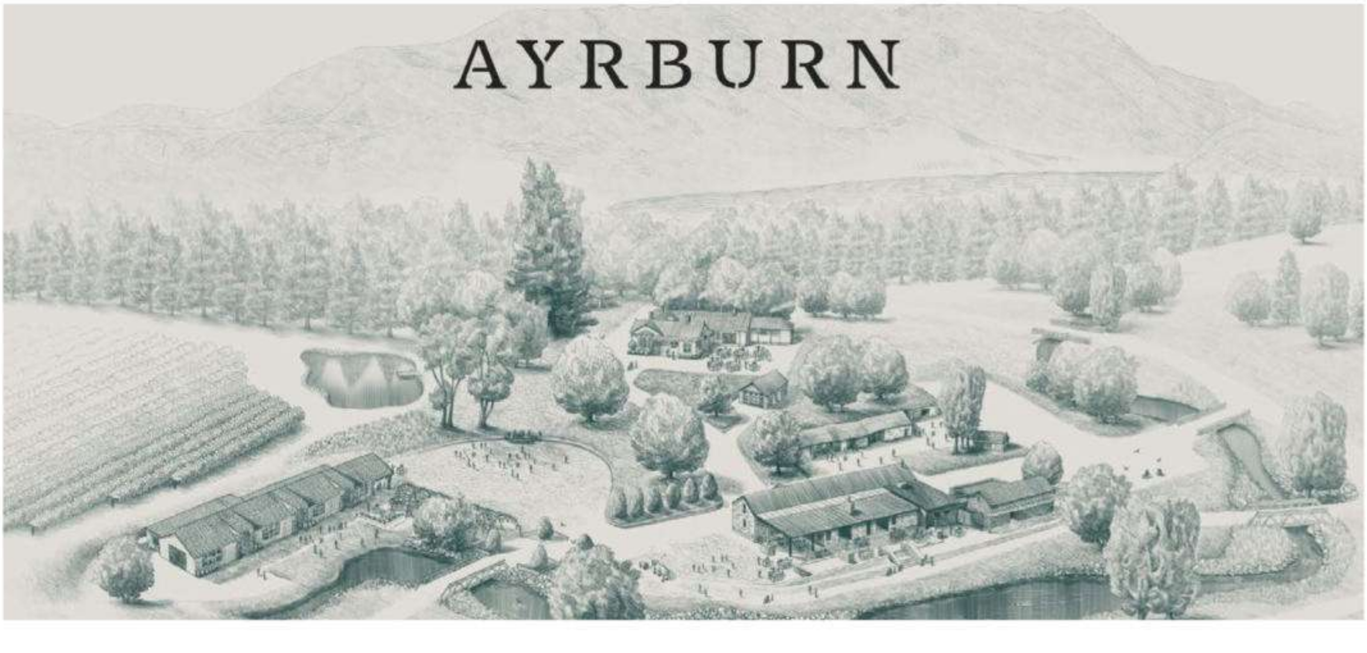
The Ayrburn Classic is an annual event offering an experience unique on New Zealand's event calendar, with restaurants, bars, food trucks, wine tastings, live entertainment, activations, exhibits, and more to complement the motoring spectacle. Celebrating the heritage, innovation, and prestige of the global automotive industry, it draws inspiration from iconic international gatherings across the US, UK, and Europe.

"Our vision for the Ayrburn Classic is to grow it into the most prestigious destination motoring event in the Southern Hemisphere, delivering an unmissable, unforgettable, and undeniably Kiwi experience for our guests," says Chris Meehan, founder and CEO of Ayrburn's owner, Winton.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

Over 160 years ago, Scottish-born William Paterson came across an expansive piece of land destined for remarkable things, tucked away in a beautiful pocket of Arrowtown, Queenstown. With a backdrop of scenic beauty and foreground of rural opportunity, Ayrburn Farm was established as one of the first farms in the area, not long after WG Rees settled in the district in 1860 and gold was discovered in the Shotover River in 1862. The stories of Ayrburn are stories of people, places, buildings, and nature – tales rich in colourful characters and remarkable endeavours, eccentricity, and whimsy.

A successful wheat, sheep, and dairy farm for more than a century, with a long tradition of warm and generous rural hospitality, Ayrburn is now a world-class wine, food, and event destination. Seamlessly blending heritage and



innovation, its crafted flavours, captivating stories, and unparalleled experiences combine to offer visitors an all-in good time.

The old farm buildings are some of the main characters in the story of Ayrburn. Remediation of the woolshed, stables, cart shed, and dairy started in October 2021. The process was delicate and slow, deconstructing each building and then recreating it with stronger hidden structures. Retaining heritage features such as the curved roof in the cart shed is essential to the execution and heart of Ayrburn, morphing the history and natural landscape with refinement to deliver a food and wine experience for the entire family to enjoy.

As Chris Meehan says, "An incredible amount of time has gone into making sure Ayrburn will be a place for great times. It embodies our commitment to celebrating the stories of the past by giving them a new future.

"Ayrburn is not just a destination; it's an invitation to have fun and experience the best of New Zealand's food, wine, and hospitality in a place chosen 160 years ago for being one of the country's most stunning locations."

KIWI PIONEERS

In keeping with both Ayrburn's pioneering history and New Zealand's proud motoring heritage, the theme for the inaugural Ayrburn Classic is 'Kiwi Pioneers'. Think of names such as McLaren, Britten, Saker, and Rodin, and this country's contribution to automotive excellence and international motor sport comes to life.

2025 FEATURE CLASSES

- Kiwi Pioneers
- American Vintage and Muscle
- Best of British
- Exceptional European
- Japanese Icons
- Awesome Australians
- Supercar Stunners
- Unique and Exotic
- 2-Wheeled Wonders
- Best in Show
- People's Choice

Entries open Monday, 2 December 2024 and spaces are limited. Visit ayrburnclassic.com to register.

JUDGING TEAM

Ashley Webb – Chief Judge, Ellerslie Intermarque Concours d'Elegance judge, former editor of *New Zealand Classic Car*
Bruce Lewis – Ellerslie Intermarque Concours d'Elegance judge
Quinton Taylor – Editor of *New Zealand Classic Car*, motorcycle and car racer and restorer
Janet and Jonathon Paape – Top-end marques and classics specialists
Greg Elder – Experienced restorer of classic and vintage vehicles, former racing driver, former Vintage Car Club president
David Merhtens – Notable restorer of Triumph sports cars, organiser of biennial Mainland Classic Tour since 1992
Vaughan Wilson – Collector, contributor to *New Zealand Classic Car*

This team of experts will be joined by international and guest judges, to be announced in the coming weeks.

PROGRAMME

Friday, 21 March

Morning–afternoon: Show cars arrive on site
Evening: Welcome party – invite only (entrants, judges, media, VIP)

Saturday, 22 March

9am: Early access – entrants, judges, media, VIPs
10am: General admission
11am: Showcase on The Dell
11.30am: Live music
2.30pm: Showcase on The Dell
3pm: Live music
4pm: Best-Dressed Awards
4.30pm: Miranda Easten concert
Evening: Awards Gala Dinner

Sunday, 23 March

9am: Early access – entrants, judges, media, VIPs
10am: General admission access
11am: Showcase on The Dell
11.30am: Best-Dressed Awards
12pm: Ladies' Long Lunch
12pm: Live music
2.30pm: Showcase on The Dell
3pm: Grand Prize draw
4pm: Collectable cars and memorabilia auction

Saturday afternoon features a very special performance by Kiwi country music star and serial DeLorean owner Miranda Easten.

VIP and festival day passes go on sale Monday, 2 December.

ayrburnclassic.com ∎

AYRBURN
CENTRAL OTAGO
PINOT NOIR

CELEBRATING NZ'S FIRST PORSCHE CLASSIC PARTNER

Ensuring the legacy lives on, NZ's first Porsche Classic, Giltrap Porsche has been certified as New Zealand's first Classic Porsche partner.

Recently, as part of helping protect a one-of-a-kind automotive legacy spanning more than 75 years, Porsche has proudly certified Giltrap Porsche as New Zealand's first Porsche Classic Partner, marking the start of an exciting new journey. This partnership brings exclusive factory training and support to the Giltrap team, enabling them to restore and protect classic Porsche vehicles with a level of care, precision and expertise never before seen in the country.

To mark this milestone, we're diving into their first classic restoration under this new accreditation, a rare right-hand-drive Porsche 356 owned by long time Porsche enthusiast, Deb Simpson.

FINALLY LIVING THE DREAM

For Deb, the love for Porsche is deep-rooted. "I don't think you can call yourself a true Porsche enthusiast until you've owned a 356," she says. Smitten by the car's unique allure, she adds, "it's just a beautiful shape—the curves, the lines... this is just a real classic."

After decades of searching, Deb finally found her dream 356 recently, featuring a fairly rare twist. "This particular 356 is a right-hand drive, and in New Zealand, it's hard to find one," she explains, before revealing that she's still slightly awe-struck by the reality of owning such a legendary car. "I just feel so proud to drive it because it's just so beautiful, and it'll be even more beautiful when it's all fixed."

Now Deb's primary goal is getting the 356 performing at its best, while still retaining the vehicle's authenticity. Subsequently, she's chosen the Classic Porsche Partners and their best-in-class expertise, especially when it comes to classic Porsche restorations that keep the vehicle as original as possible. After talking with the team, they've devised a plan that's all about preserving the vehicle's current state–like the existing paintwork and engine-to best effect. "We've chosen to do as much as we can without changing too much of the car," Deb shares before adding, with a laugh, "Basically, they'll replace what needs replacing and give it all a really good tweak!"

BRING NEW LIFE TO A TIMELESS CLASSIC

For everyone at Giltrap Porsche, the new Porsche Classic Partner status is the fulfilment of long-held dreams. Everyone in the team is aware that it's a special privilege. Workshop Manager Paulino Saavedra Jnr explains, "It brings a lot of inspiration. Customers love the vehicles, we love the vehicles, and we just get to meet in the middle and renew them, bring them back on the road, and keep them alive. It's why we're doing this."

Paulino's colleague, Porsche Classic technician Kai Newstead, is equally reverential, recognising the duty that's bestowed upon them. "The knowledge is getting scarcer as time goes on. We've had a chance to go to Stuttgart and learn from the baton carriers of the past, and I guess we're carrying the baton now."

Giltrap's newly certified Porsche Classic Partner team are eager to bring some of their new skills to bear on this first intricate restoration. Kai adds, "Deb's car has so much potential. With our plan, it's going to be an absolute winner."

THE PAINSTAKING PATH TO PERFECTION

"The painstaking path to perfection Over the months ahead, the team meticulously restored original components, removed rust, reconditioned the engine, enhanced the brakes, and restored the suspension—all while staying as true as possible to original specifications. It's a lengthy process, but as they say, good things take time. Finally, almost a year after they started, the Porsche Classic team reached the finish line.

"The car has been brought back to new factory spec, Porsche components have been used and existing parts have been refurbished, so most of the car is still original," Newstead explains. And it's clear alongside the considerable elbow grease, there's been plenty of passion from the team too. "I'm starting to feel very attached to this car, to the point where I've been researching extra details at home, "Kai shares, grinning like a proud father as he surveys his 356handiworks."Deb is going to feel like she won the lottery when she gets this car back."

PORSCHE
Classic Partner
Porsche Centre Auckland (Giltrap)

Porsche celebration of dreams

THE FINAL REVEAL, THE START OF A NEW CHAPTER

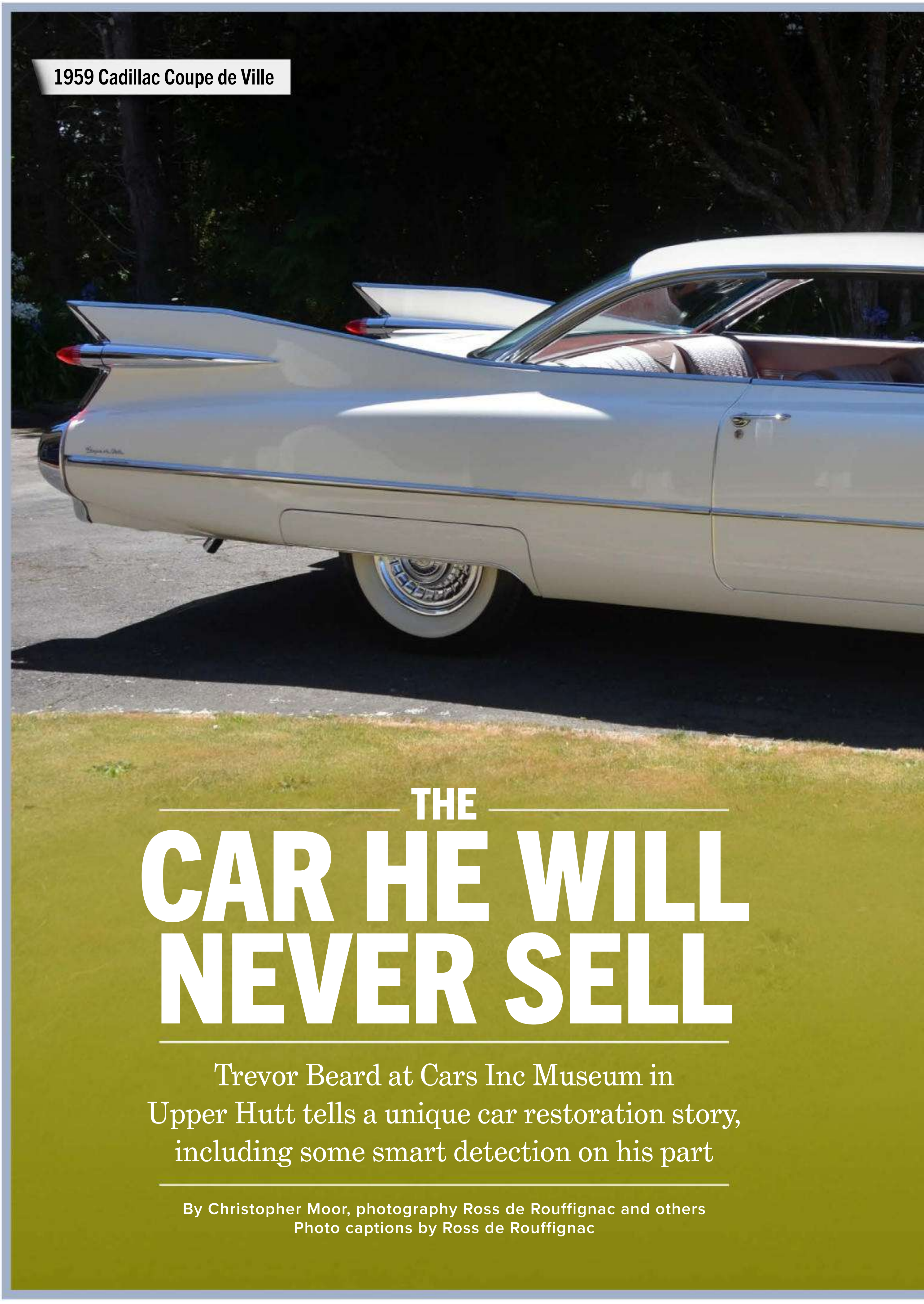
After many months of careful work, the handover finally arrives. As it's a first, the Giltrap Porsche team bring Deb into the dealership and send this first of a new breed of New Zealand Porsche vehicles on its way with a special celebration as Deb wipes a few tears from her eyes.

"It's been such an amazing journey, and this has just topped it off beautifully. I'm absolutely blown away," she says. "It's been very emotional actually, knowing the history of the car and what it's been through, and now she's just in these loving hands. What a wonderful way to begin this stage of her life."

"We shared the same excitement with her as we worked on the vehicle, and just seeing her excitement now, it brings it full circle," Paulino adds with a satisfied smile. Deb gets her first chance to put the 356 to the test on the open road, and her excitement is once again unmistakable.

"There's nothing like driving an old classic like this. She's coming to the party just beautifully," she beams. And it's clear she loved the restoration process almost as much as she loves the drive. "The best thing about the experience was being involved every step of the way. And I've only got the mechanics and the restoration crew to thank for that. You really felt like part of the process. Yup, if this little baby's got anything to do with it, Porsche Classic is off to a great start."

Porsche 356 owner Deb Simpson



1959 Cadillac Coupe de Ville

THE CAR HE WILL NEVER SELL

Trevor Beard at Cars Inc Museum in Upper Hutt tells a unique car restoration story, including some smart detection on his part

By Christopher Moor, photography Ross de Rouffignac and others
Photo captions by Ross de Rouffignac

What a passenger sees before climbing inside

A happy Trevor Beard smiled when the internet trading site advised him that he'd bought his wished-for 1959 Cadillac Coupe de Ville Coupe, early in 2018.

Six years later, the restored Caddy was the bridal car at a mate's daughter's wedding, after Trevor had met his self-imposed restoration deadline just three days before the ceremony.

"I got really sick," he says, "and didn't know if I was going to be here to finish the restoration." That was more than two years ago.

DEFINITELY A KEEPER

The de Ville is the car that he says he'll never sell. It's very special to Trevor, who is a qualified mechanic by trade. He found the unique engine restoration method he devised to be good therapy for his recovery from illness.

Happily, Trevor shows no signs of any past major illness when he meets with photographer Ross de Rouffignac and me for the photos for this article.

He says that he'd always wanted an iconic '59 Caddy Coupe, as they had the largest fins in automotive history. Seeing one for sale on the internet but unable to fly to Auckland to see it for himself, he asked the guy he'd bought a Dodge Viper from to inspect it for him. The guy reported back that it was a lovely straight car, but that it needed some chrome work doing, and although it was tidy underneath, it should be repainted.

JOURNEY BEGINS

Low Tow Services transported the car from Auckland, and the Caddy went straight into Trevor's garage. He began stripping down the bumpers and grille the next day. The car that he restored had to be perfect.

He brought out a folder containing papers relating to the Caddy's history, and a mint copy of a brochure with pictures and information about all the 1959 Cadillacs. His joy in owning his dream car increased when he saw that the brochure's Coupe de Ville was painted in Dover White, the same colour as his. →

CHANGE OF PLANS

Trevor's illness forced a rethink on his original plan to take the engine out while the panel and paint were being done, but plan B took him 14½ months to complete. He decided to restore the engine and transmission in the car, working down onto the engine.

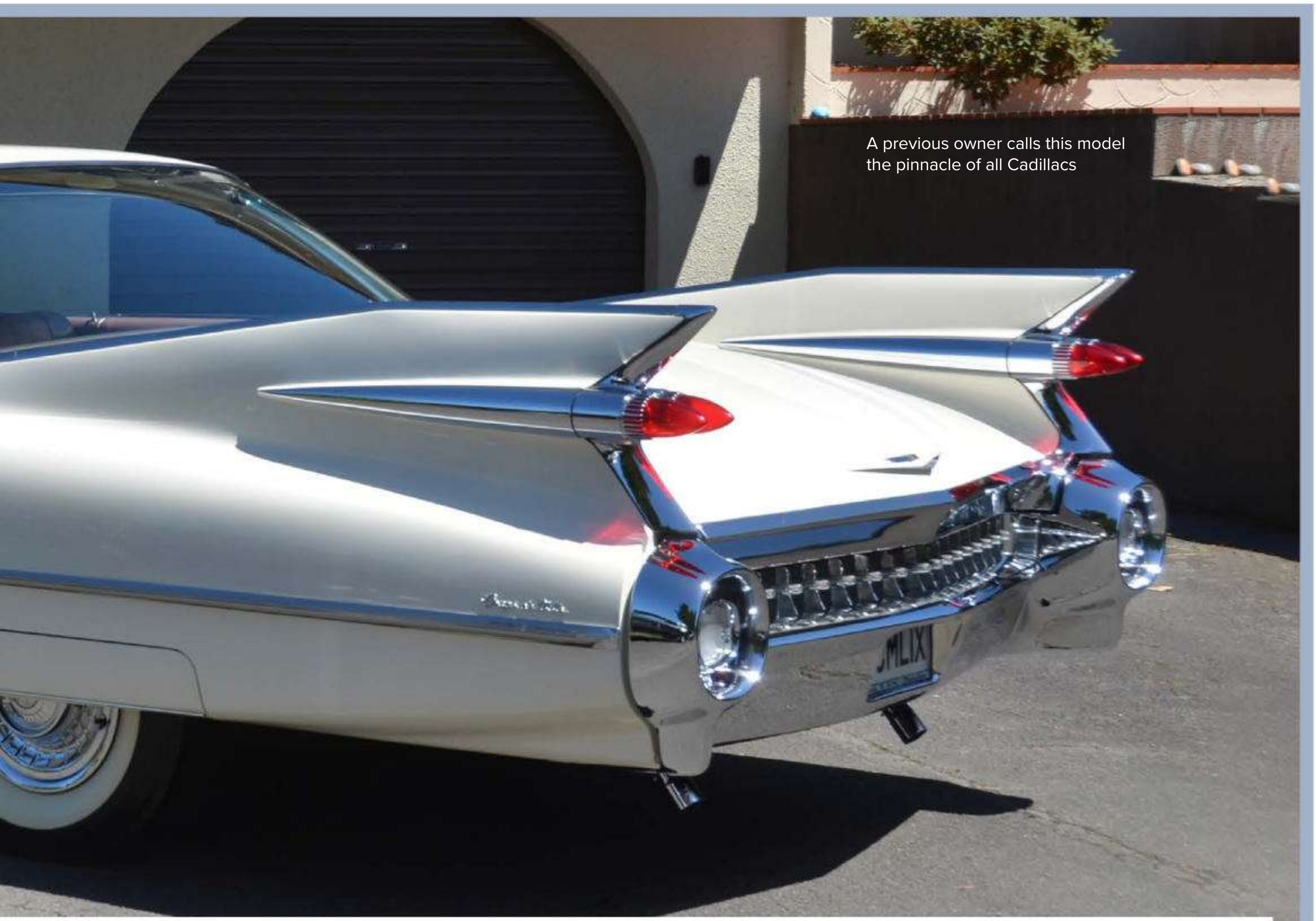
"The car had received a fantastic paint job from Gary Holmes of Raceway Total Panel Repairs before I started the engine, transmission, and front and rear suspension restoration," says Trevor. "The dashboard had been beautifully restored by Nick Trethewey and refitted, and the bonnet was back on the vehicle. Hence, I had to completely wrap the Caddy's body and bonnet in many rolls of pretaped masking paper before I started using any spray paints."

He's very grateful to Bruce Behrent and Russ Denzel for helping to refit and re-shim the incredibly heavy front and rear bumper assemblies and the two sections of the bullet-style grille for correct alignment.

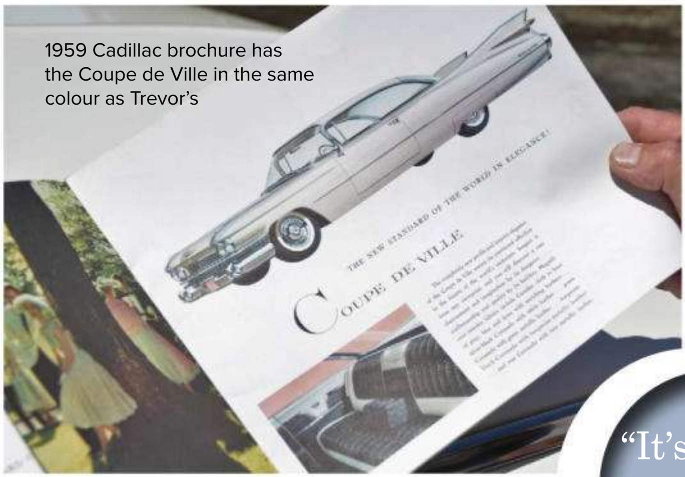
Trevor had lain across a long piece of particle board covered with layers of foam bed underlay placed between the front fenders, and he stripped down the engine to a bare block in place. All frost plugs were removed. The sludge build-up in the water jackets was flushed out by a high-pressure hose through the frost plug openings. All the muck and rusty water was caught in a child's blue plastic paddling pool placed under the engine.

New brass frost plugs were then fitted, before the original Harrison radiator was flushed with compressed air and water. When the front timing cover was removed, the original timing chain was revealed to have very little excess play, so Trevor left it alone. The

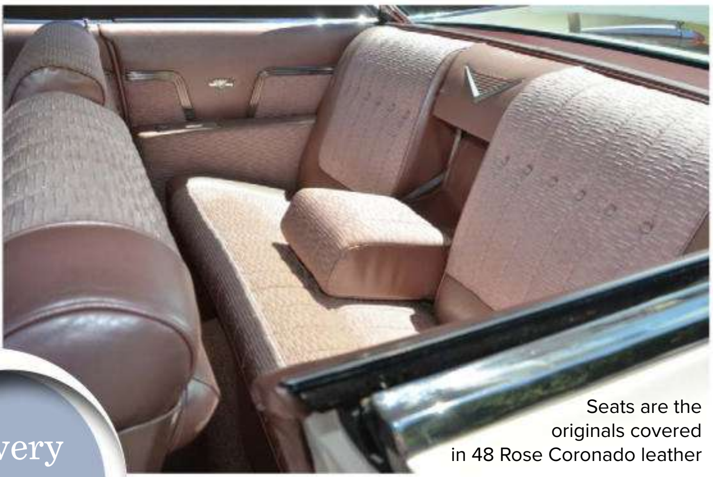
With the 1959 Cadillac hearse from Harbour City Funeral Home (photo: Tony McDonald)



A previous owner calls this model the pinnacle of all Cadillacs

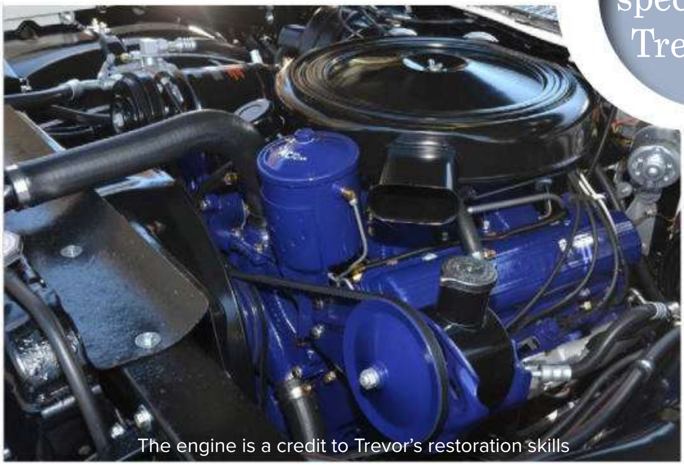

THE NEW STANDARD OF THE WORLD IN ELEGANCE!
COUPE DE VILLE

1959 Cadillac brochure has the Coupe de Ville in the same colour as Trevor's

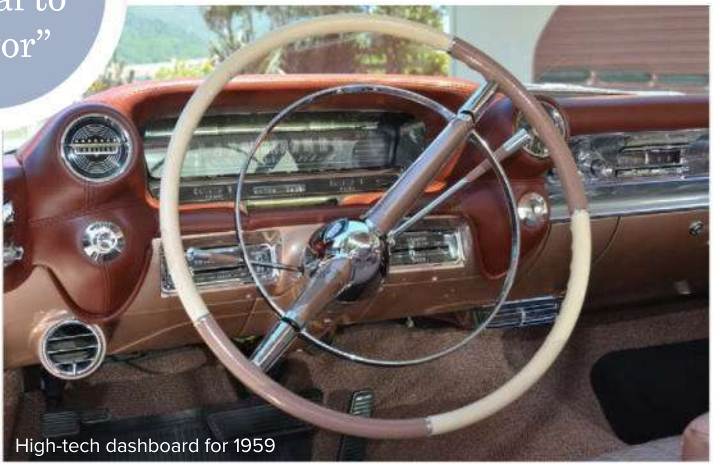


Seats are the originals covered in 48 Rose Coronado leather

> "It's very special to Trevor"



The engine is a credit to Trevor's restoration skills



High-tech dashboard for 1959

My first impression of Trevor's Cadillac

engine block valley pan was removed and 64 years' worth of carbon and sludge got washed out. The block was scrubbed and thoroughly cleaned down, especially around pushrods and lifters.

GOOD PARTS SUPPLY

Trevor used a lot of original equipment parts in the restoration. They were more expensive, but he wanted it done once and done right.

After cleaning, months of fastidious masking and painting of the block, exhaust manifolds, and transmission followed, which was "a huge, huge job in itself" says Trevor.

Gus Carmont gets a pat on the back from Trevor for locating the original Cadillac blue paint for the engine and transmission, and for his vast knowledge on 1950s Cadillacs.

He doubts that anyone else would have even contemplated his 'very bizarre' restoration method – which includes making things harder for himself by working at nights with the help of LED torches in a garage without electricity.

John Veneberg, a good mate from work, also came to the rescue, extracting a rusted and seized water-pump securing bolt that snapped in the engine block while removing the water pump. He then re-tapped the bolt hole. Trevor could not perform the work himself due to his health at the time.

Trevor must have had times when the restoration didn't go well. The nearest he comes to admitting this is in saying that his grandson Cohen tickled his feet when things got fraught.

DISAPPOINTMENT THEN SUCCESS

Trevor was disappointed when he hadn't finished the restoration in time for his daughter Kayla's school ball. Steve Coulston, a loyal mate of many years, stepped in and drove father and daughter to the ball in his Ford Galaxie.

Trevor now had another reason for wanting to complete the restoration: to say thank you to Steve for bailing him out. He said that he'd have the Caddy ready for 20 January 2024, when Teri, Steve's daughter, would marry Brayan Heredia Santamaria.

He got there with three days to spare. Teri and Steve were absolutely rapt when they saw the car. The wedding photos show that the bride and groom had the right car for their wedding. Steve told a delighted Trevor that there had been many favourable comments on the bridal car. That really made the day for him.

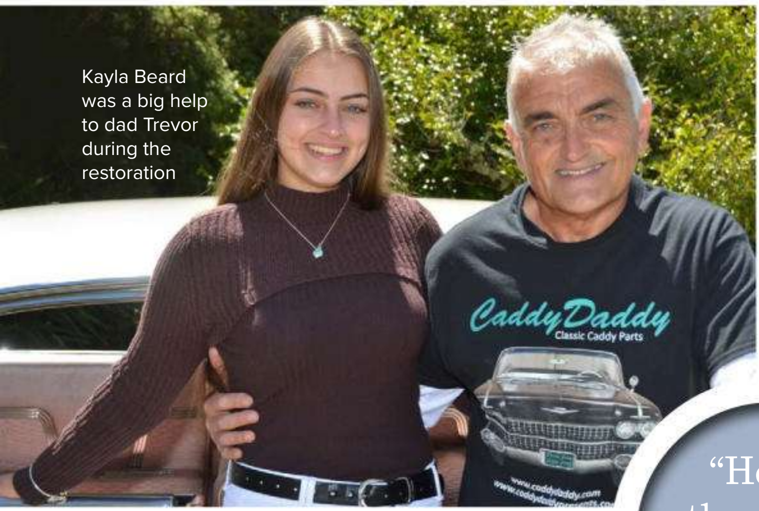
The photographer from LightPerSecond Creative Projects took Trevor aside on the day, saying to him that there'd been requests to use the Caddy at other weddings. "This is a definite one-off," was Trevor's reply.

THE GIRLS PITCH IN

While Ross de Rouffignac photographed Trevor with the car, I spoke with Kayla Beard, Trevor's daughter, and asked if she helped her dad.

"A bit," she says. Her dad says that her help, and that from her older sister, Leticia, was "invaluable", and it's clear that it meant a lot.

Kayla didn't come when Trevor took Ross and me for a brief spin in the car that only he is allowed to drive. He drives his de Ville as if he were born for its steering wheel. From where I sat in the front seat, I wasn't aware of him



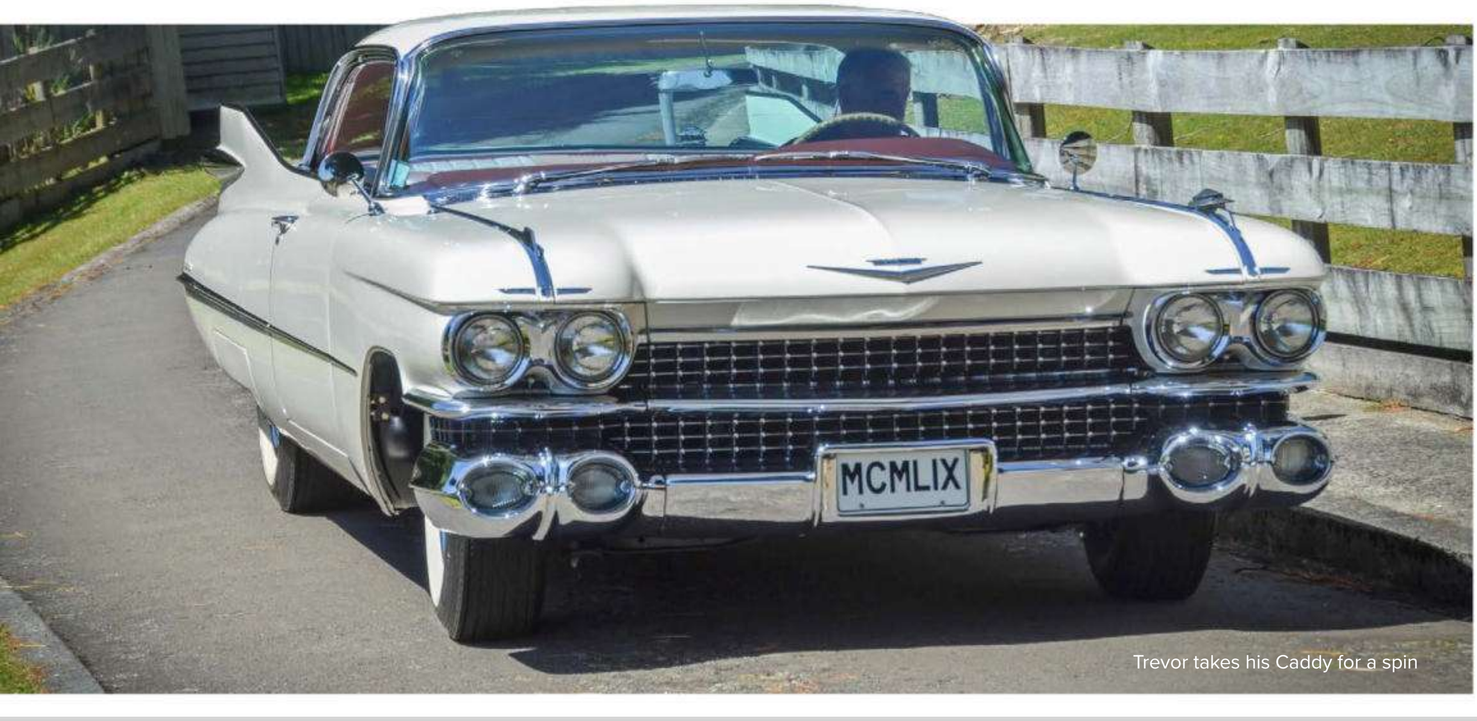
Kayla Beard was a big help to dad Trevor during the restoration

CaddyDaddy
Classic Caddy Parts

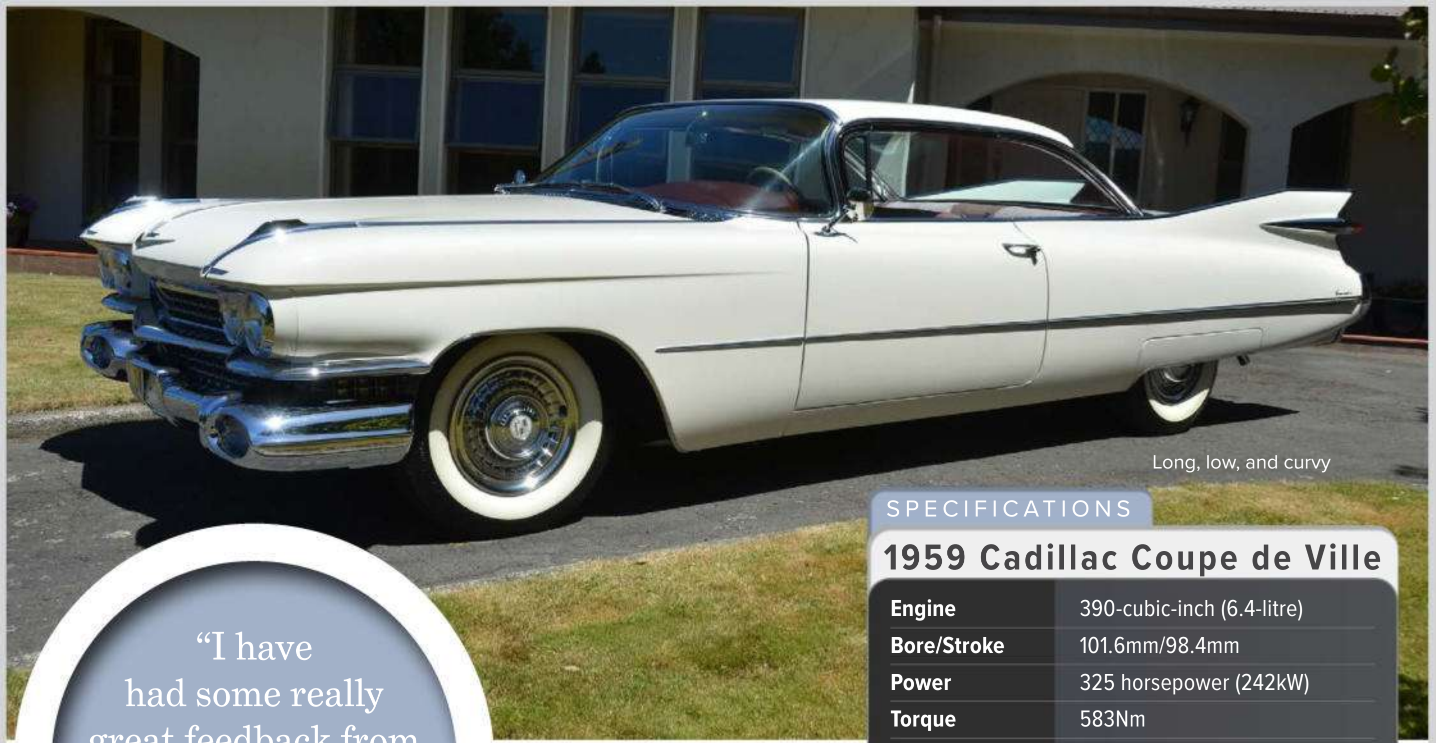
Trevor is at home behind the steering wheel

> “He got there with three days to spare”

The bridal car at Teri and Brayan’s wedding (photo: LightPerSecond Creative Projects)



Trevor takes his Caddy for a spin



Long, low, and curvy

> “I have had some really great feedback from people saying how lovely and mint the Caddy is”

No mistaking Caddy badging

‘Coupe de Ville’ badging above chrome strip on each rear flank

SPECIFICATIONS

1959 Cadillac Coupe de Ville

Engine	390-cubic-inch (6.4-litre)
Bore/Stroke	101.6mm/98.4mm
Power	325 horsepower (242kW)
Torque	583Nm
Engine No.	59J127931
Transmission	Four-speed Hydra-Matic
Chassis style	59-6337
Body No.	FW19186
Trim	48 Rose Coronado leather
Paint	12 Dover White
Dimensions:	
Length	5715mm
Width	2037mm
Height	1428mm
Weight	2200kg
Wheelbase	3302mm
Seating	Six
Production	21,924

being heavily involved, the ride was just so fluid.

And relaxing too. The rose Coronado leather seats are the originals, and they mould to the back where support is needed. I had ample room to stretch out my legs on the newly fitted carpet. The view from the wraparound windscreen gave me the impression of being right in the picture.

Riding in a 1959 Cadillac was even better the second time around – I had previously sat up front in the 1959 Cadillac hearse that Trevor had photographed alongside the de Ville for this article. I wanted more, but I had to get out about a hundred yards from where we’d started if I wanted to see this magnetic Caddy in motion. If Trevor hasn’t seen his de Ville in action, he is missing out on a real treat.

DETECTION

A couple of days after the photo shoot, a jubilant Trevor contacted me with some very good news: he now knew his Caddy’s early history.

Looking again at the folder that he’d shown us had set him off detecting. Going through its contents, he’d found a WOF check sheet made out to Aucklander John Webber in November 2014 with a mobile phone number entered in the wrong column. “I had nothing to lose by calling this number,” Trevor recalls, “and a guy answered the phone. I asked if I was talking to John Webber, and to my absolute amazement he said yes. I then told him why I was ringing and I think he was as surprised as I was.”

John had decided after selling his previous 1958 Cadillac that he would love to own what he considered the pinnacle of Cadillacs: a 1959 Cadillac Coupe de Ville. He approached his friend, drag racing legend Garth Hogan, who tracked down a Dover White specimen in California for him. The sale was completed, and the car was shipped to New Zealand and registered here on 3 March 2006.

ONE OWNER

The Caddy had had only one American owner, an elderly couple, who had racked up a mileage of just 69,000 since new.

Trevor says, “I have no reason to doubt that. Being a mechanic, I know when an engine has had some sort of work performed on it, but it appeared that no nuts or bolts had ever been off the engine.”

John Webber, however, decided not to proceed with the planned restoration and sold the car to Mark Hayward of Tristram European for his classic automobile collection. Trevor bought the still-unrestored Caddy from Mark Hayward in 2018.

John and Trevor really hit it off during their phone chat and planned to meet up at Cars Inc, Upper Hutt, for Cadillac talk, since the car is on loan to the museum.

“I have had some really great feedback from people saying how lovely and mint the Caddy is,” Trevor says proudly.

He has already thanked the many people who helped and encouraged him with his Cadillac’s restoration. Space doesn’t permit listing them all here. They know who they are because he thanked them all profusely before this article was ever conceived. ■

FIFTY YEARS OF TRIUMPH

Dear Editor
I am writing on behalf of the New Zealand TR Register. We are having our national weekend for the register in Auckland on February 28–3 March 2025, and we are bringing a large number of these cars to Auckland for this event. We are expecting about 60 cars of all vintages of this marque to be present.

EVENTS

The event, kindly sponsored by Classic Car Insurance, starts on Friday, 28 February with a meet and greet at 5pm, with drinks and nibbles. Saturday, we have a tour of greater Auckland with lunch at Westbrook vineyard. On Saturday night we will have a dinner and dance at the RNZYS [Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron] and, as we are celebrating 50 years of the New Zealand TR Register, we turn back the clock 50 years to the disco years for the theme of the night.

CONCOURS

A concours for these cars will be held at the Euro-Brit Car Show at Lloyd Elsmore Park on 2 March 2025. Cars will be judged in eight classes. The winners receive a cup, certificate, and medal, while runners up in each section get a medal and certificate.

PRESENTATION OF PRIZES

Sunday night is prize-giving at CT Club, Commerce Club of Auckland, in Greenlane. We will hear from a guest speaker from England who worked at Speke, where Triumphs were assembled, with stories from the assembly line.

Monday, 3 March is pack up day and we head to Windross Farm Golf Course, Ardmore, for a short business session and farewell. From here, the participants will either head home or participate in the after-tour drive.

FIFTY YEARS OF TRIUMPH

The Triumph Register is also celebrating 50 years of supporting its members in all facets of owning and running one of these classic cars. Cars range in age from the first TR2 in 1952 to the last TR7 in 1981 and some rare cars such as the Swallow Doretti. This is a hand-formed aluminium-body car made by Swallow Coachworks on a TR4 chassis and running gear. There are only five of these in New Zealand.

Kind regards
Dennis Greenman

THY 214
829 DRF

ALL COMERS INVITED TO LAKE EXCURSION

Dear Editor
2024 marks the 44th running of the annual Lake Ferry Excursion, organised by the Sunbeam Car Club of NZ (Wellington). The Lake Ferry Excursion always takes place on the second Saturday in December. This year that makes it 14 December.

As always, we meet at the Fell Museum at 11am for an 11.30 departure. Please note that we meet at the big oak tree outside the Fell Museum at 11.20 for a driver's briefing.

Then we depart from Featherston heading to Lake Ferry, where we meet to talk over lunch. You can bring your own picnic lunch or wander across to the Lake Ferry Hotel for a pub meal.

We welcome all car clubs along on the day and please feel free to send this notice on to anyone in other car clubs you think might be interested. Note that we also welcome people who don't belong to a car club. The day is about driving classic cars and talking to other enthusiasts, not about association with a particular car club.

In the past, we have had English, American, Italian, and French cars attending. We have had the Constructors Car Club, Corvette Club, Capri Club, Mustang Club, and Early American Club, as well as other smaller clubs attend, as well as classic motorbikes. We are also inviting and welcome all car clubs from the Manawatu and Wairarapa and further afield.

Kind regards
Fred Alvrez
Sunbeam Car Club of New Zealand, Wellington Branch

Send your letters to: editor@classiccar.co.nz

TRIUMPH
XQ7114
Vitesse 2

Triumph Herald Vitesse looks great

THE ZEN OF CLASSIC RESTORATION

SKC Restorations co-owner Doug Sturgin says that what started as a tech-sector CEO's classic car indulgence has evolved into a burgeoning international classic car restoration business

Words and photography by Stephen Philp

Hidden among non-descript industrial units off Rosebank Road in Auckland are two companies satisfying the needs of exacting international customers. Group3 Technology specialises in high-end electrical engineering, while South Kensington Classics (SKC) restores mostly British classic cars.

I stumbled on SKC thanks to a two-litre Triumph Vitesse advertised on the internet. I also noticed a freshly painted Hillman Imp shell in the background of the Vitesse pics. Imps are a love of mine, having charged about in one on the then comparatively empty streets of '80s London.

HANDS ON WITH HIGH TECH AND CLASSICS

The co-owner of SKC and CEO of Group3 Technology, Doug Sturgin, met me and we went through the Vitesse, and Doug's other unit containing '60s and '70s British classics – an MGB, TR3, Spitfires, a GT6, a Jensen-Healey and an Austin three-litre Princess Vanden Plas.

The blue and white Imp is owned by Doug's SKC Japanese business partner, Tom Ucai. Tom's background is in banking, and he is currently based in New Zealand.

The Imp's fabulous little Coventry Climax–based 875cc

Company owners Doug Sturgin (left) and Tom Ucai

engine is awaiting a rebuild thanks to what Doug jokingly calls a "Tom brain fart": old oil drained out, clutch replaced, but no oil put back in. Tom has become an Imp fanatic in New Zealand and has another in storage. They are "Tom's kryptonite", Doug suggests wryly.

Officially retired, Doug still keeps an eye on Group3's engineering research and development and continues to represent it abroad. Group3 specialises in highly sensitive electronic and magnetic measuring equipment, with prestigious customers worldwide including Sumitomo Heavy Industries, Japan; Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, India; and Los Alamos National Laboratory in the US.

Group3 systems are also used in the medical industry aiding cancer therapies and in medical research at the GNS Science accelerator facility in Wellington.

"I worked hard and was lucky enough to retire at 58. I was doing 80 to 90 hours a week at Group3," says Doug. "I've been messing with cars since I was a teenager. I've always had an old car, even on my UK OE in 1998. I bought a Vitesse and restored it while I was there. It's kind of in my blood really. When I stepped back from Group3 a couple of years ago, it allowed me to focus on restoring cars again, and I installed a car lift in what is now SKC's dedicated spray-booth unit."

ACCIDENTAL START-UP

SKC's restoration business began by chance. Doug had a smart MG Midget, and Tom Ukai was looking for one to buy. Meeting at the Kumeu Classic Car & Hot Rod Festival, Doug discovered that Tom was well-known in the New Zealand classic car circles and had a number of old English cars stored near Hamilton. He also had a collection of classics outside Tokyo, in Shibuya. A "banker by day, car collector by night and weekends", according to Doug.

They decided to join forces on the storage front, splitting the cost of the units that Doug found in Rosebank Road. It gave both of them space for their collections, and Doug some much needed workspace.

"I wasn't looking to start a restoration business; it was going to be our shared storage and resto space." But it became one.

"We get on well. Tom is very patient with me because I can be a bossy bastard and very single-minded," says Doug." I like things to be done properly. Tom is relaxed – Zen, if you like."

He has been to Japan with Tom several times now. "A really good bunch of enthusiasts meet at Tom's place to drive and talk about old cars. In Japan, you have to be relatively wealthy to have a car space or a garage to work on something. You can't park your car on the street, you

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Group3
Group3 Technology Ltd
2 Charann Place
Avondale

South Kensington Classics
Classic
CAR SERVICE
MOB: 0212803390
ニュージーランド旧車天国
サウス ケンジントン クラッシックス

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(1) Tom and Doug getting the TR3's bonnet adjustment spot on. (2) A full house, Triumph, Jensen-Healy; on the hoists, MGB and Toyota Celica. (3) Modern automated spray booth, essential for top-class work. (4) Partner Tom Ucai's Hillman Imp. (5) Very rare Subaru coupé going through the painting process

need a parking space, so they need a place to tinker on the weekends."

SKC evolved into a business after Tom talked to a specialist classics dealer in Tokyo who only sold cars in mint condition, and Doug had some in lovely condition. Tom suggested that the dealer come to Auckland and view them. He bought six cars on the spot, including the red MG being worked on.

"Without Tom's enthusiasm and knowledge of the Japanese classic scene, I'd still be pottering away with my little passion projects," Doug says.

Now that it's a business, he gets to enjoy his hobby full time.

KNOWING YOUR MARKET

SKC funds its projects by delivering high-quality classics to the Japanese market. Given the space restrictions, Doug says that Japanese buyers want turnkey cars restored to a high level. There is no margin in buying cars here that are OK drivers and then sending them to Japan after a carwash.

Three or four of SKC's projects have been total rebuilds, while others in a better state were body-worked, repainted, and the mechanicals thoroughly sorted.

Tom's dealer in Japan says the market now is around ¥5 million for a fully restored, small to mid-sized British sports car. That's about NZ$55K–60K. There's also a price point at around ¥2.5 million ($30K).

"A couple of Spitfires we sent up sold for close to that lower number," says Doug. "Last year, we decided to display two cars at a large automotive show in Japan. We presented an uprated Spitfire and a GT6: total rebuilds, every single nut and bolt, new paint top to bottom – they were beautiful cars. The show mostly featured Japanese domestic market cars, so there was a lot of interest in the British classics.

"Not many Japanese experience other countries and cultures, so they are

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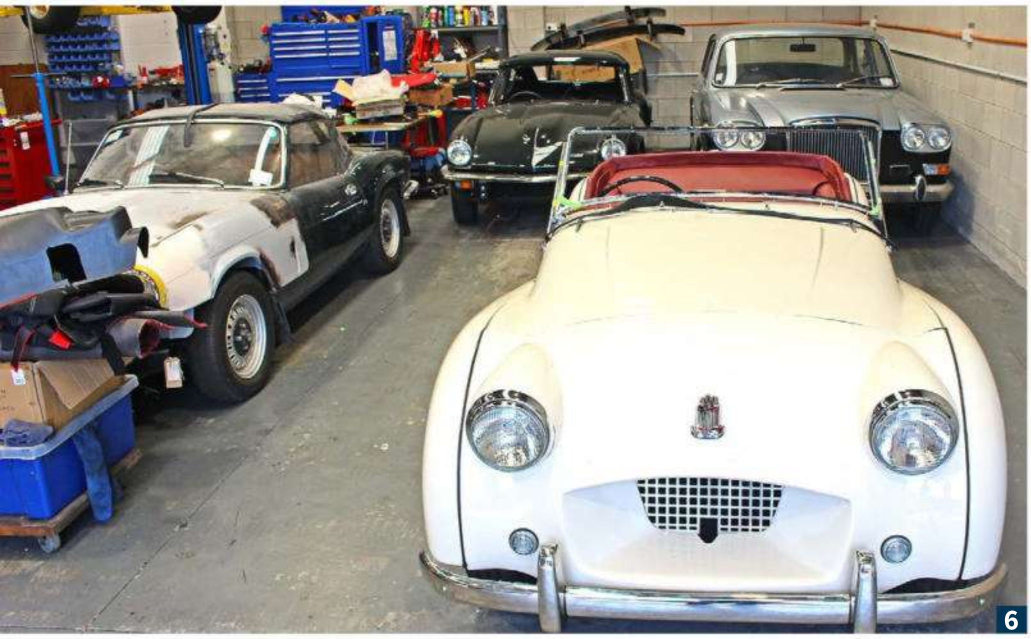
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(6) Classic Triumph TR3 – behind is a rare New Zealand Vanden Plas conversion on a three-litre Austin Princess. (7) Getting the GT6 bonnet into shape. (8) Stack 'em: MGB and Jensen-Healey. (9) Big improvement once refurbished. (10) Doug getting into the dark art of balancing twin carburettors!

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naturally attracted to owning something different that will stand out amongst the Toyotas, Nissans, and Hondas. They are attracted to smaller easy-to-maintain and exotic British classic cars."

They will go back again this year, probably with four cars. "Tom has two Subaru Brumbies he wants to show, plus we've got a couple more English sports."

Doug says that being seen is essential so that Japanese enthusiasts get to appreciate the quality and that New Zealand cars haven't been driven on salty roads, they are original, and right-hand drive.

JAPANESE TASTES

Doug gives us the rundown on the current cars in their workshop: "The TR2 was a deceased-estate barn find. The previous owner had largely restored it. The chassis and body was painted and powder-coated and the mechanicals were done, and we are finishing the interior. The nose section was from a TR3 and modified to fit. Someone must have had an accident and mated it to the TR2's front end – because that's what you did back then. We imported new panels from the UK, returned the car to its original specs and repainted it. That car has been sold to a customer in Tokyo."

Tom's had the Austin three-litre Princess Vanden Plas in his collection as a daily driver for a while. The engine is a straight-six, the same as in an MGC. Doug thinks that it's probably the only one surviving.

"The little GT6 was an absolute basket case," Doug says. "I started building this car about two-and-a-half years ago. Almost every panel has been replaced. One of my local customers offered me his Spitfire in part exchange and we had a customer in Japan looking for a Spitfire at the time. We cleaned up the GT6, put it together, but there's something odd going on. It probably had a bump in one corner. If it's too hard to fix and line everything

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Looking sharp: little Lotus Elan

up, we'll swap the chassis out."

The green Spitfire belonging to the GT6 customer and had also been crashed, by a mechanic taking it for a test run. It sat for a year, so SKC has fixed it. The owner would like to turn it into a 'Spit-Six', Doug says. It already wears the original GT6 bonnet from the former 'basket case'.

"They do exist; it's a popular modification. You run pretty much everything the same as a Spitfire; you've just got to have the balls to do it," Doug says.

"The Celica was imported for a local guy. It's quite a rare and valuable car, probably worth NZ$70K–75K when finished, not yet where the Z-cars are, though."

Moving on to the Jensen-Healey: "This is one that we bought from a local guy because it seemed cheap at $11,000 bucks. They are very underrated, I think. It has a 2.2-litre Lotus twin-cam unit that develops a fair bit of power for a car of its size. Colin Chapman's fingerprints are all over the thing, but people don't seem to be that interested in them. It's a strange mix of Lotus and Healey. I guess Brits couldn't quite get their heads around the genetics.

"This is quite a nice one, it's not rusty; it just hasn't been restored to a particularly high standard. We're going to spend a bit of time on it, fit new soft-top and carpets, and send it to Japan. We have a storage facility there now so people can see and feel it. Getting an idea of an unusual car from the other side of the world can be tricky."

And the MG?

"That one was literally a barn find, down in Thames or around that area. The car had been restored by an English gentleman about 28 years ago. The couple that bought it let it sit in their shed for 28 years. It had been well restored body-wise, but it was filthy, covered in pigeon shit, cobwebs, and feather. We've had it repainted, replaced the floors and generally cleaned up stuff underneath. We've replaced a bunch of incorrect parts. It came with rubber-bumper MGB springs fitted so it sat way too high, and we are putting in an overdrive gear-box at the new owner's request."

Then, of course, there's Tom's little Hillman: "The engine now needs a rebuild, but it's been body-worked and painted in record time – partly to demonstrate how quickly we can get a quality paint job done." Previously, they relied on paint contractors who only had access to a booth over weekends. That was nerve-wracking for all concerned, so Doug and Tom installed their own spray booth.

LOCAL RESISTANCE?

Doug acknowledges that some New Zealand classic car enthusiasts might not be in favour of seeing some favourite models being exported.

"They would prefer them to stay in the local scene, and I totally understand. We are always upfront with people when we buy a car. We want people to be comfortable with a family member's fate. Owners are usually relieved to have made the sale and to know that their cars will likely get a big birthday.

"And we are very open in our regular posts on our Facebook page. Happily, the vast majority of responses are complimentary.

"Obviously, we are delighted when Kiwis ask us to restore their cars knowing that they will be driven and seen in New Zealand, but I also see it this way: the more cars that are properly restored and kept on the road – wherever they are – the more spare parts will be available worldwide, whether discovered or produced." ∎

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2025

19-22 February

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Americarna NZ Ltd

SUPERCHEAP AUTO AMERICARNA 2025

A CELEBRATION OF AMERICAN CAR CULTURE

Buckle up for Supercheap Auto Americarna 2025, a unique celebration of American vehicles, taking place across Taranaki from Wednesday, 19 February to Saturday, 22 February

SUPERCHEAP AUTO

New Zealand AMERICARNA CELEBRATING USA CULTURE

This beloved annual event draws participants and spectators to revel in US car culture, scenic convoys, vibrant street events, and family-friendly fun for the 17th year. Whether you're showcasing your prized car or cheering from the sidelines, Americarna 2025 is an unmissable experience. We are very pleased to announce our new naming-rights sponsor, Supercheap Auto, which will be adding some new and exciting elements to the event.

WHAT IS AMERICARNA?

Americarna is more than a car show; it's a community-driven event where American car enthusiasts from New Zealand and abroad come together to share their passion. The week-long event features convoys, public displays, and celebratory gatherings across Taranaki. From classic muscle cars to hot rods and motorcycles, the event highlights the diversity and craftsmanship of US vehicles.

Wednesday: Ōpunake Cruise and Welcome Function

Ōpunake Cruise: The event kicks off with a convoy traveling along the scenic Surf Highway 45 to Ōpunake beach. Enjoy the incredible line-up of vehicles while soaking in the coastal views and mingling with fellow car enthusiasts.

Welcome Function: Returning to TSB Stadium at 3pm, the casual gathering offers participants a chance to reconnect and meet new participants. We have a unique Kenworth custom-built barbecue truck that the hospice will be manning (gold coin donation) cooking typical kiwi barbecue food. We also have the Supercheap Auto Fan Zone, offering exclusive benefits on offer for entrants.

Thursday: Rest Home Run and Waitara and Inglewood Convoys

Rest Home Run: Over 200 American vehicles will spread joy by visiting rest homes in New Plymouth, providing an opportunity for residents to reminisce and enjoy these stunning cars. →

Waitara and Inglewood Convoys: From midday, convoys travel to Waitara and Inglewood, featuring some new routes. Both stops will include public vehicle displays and celebrations.

Friday: Stratford, Hāwera, and Mangorei Road Spectacle

Stratford and Hāwera Convoy: The day begins at 10am with vehicles heading to Stratford, parking along Broadway for public viewing. At 1pm, the convoy moves through Kaponga and Manaia, delighting roadside fans before arriving in Hāwera at 1.45pm.

Saturday: AmeriCARnival and Farewell Function

AmeriCARnival: New Plymouth CBD: From 10am to 3pm, the CBD transforms into a family-friendly carnival. Further information follows.

Farewell Function: The event concludes at TSB Stadium with an evening of awards, live music from The Monroes, and dancing. Awards and prizes will be presented.

San Francisco hot rod legend Roy Brizio will attend, select his pick, and present this one-off trophy for the Roy Brizio Pick Choice Award at the farewell dinner.

Trophy categories include:
- Supercheap Auto Choice Award
- Roy Brizio Pick Choice Award
- American Visitor Pick Choice Award
- Canadian Visitor Pick Choice Award
- Americarna Choice Award, which will feature on the 2026 promotional artwork.

Generous prizes for participants include:
- $5K in Supercheap Auto vouchers.
- $5K in Z vouchers
- A Pace Power & Air stainless-steel roll cabinet valued at $1995.

AmeriCARnival: A DAY OF CELEBRATION IN THE HEART OF NEW PLYMOUTH

Join us for AmeriCARnival, one of the highlights of Americarna's festivities.

Saturday, 22 February, 10am to 3pm

The streets of New Plymouth's CBD come alive with stunning vehicle displays, where attendees can marvel at everything from vintage classics to custom creations. This free event welcomes car enthusiasts and families alike to experience the passion and creativity of American car culture.

Puke Ariki Landing transforms into a hub of activity, offering free kids' entertainment, including a rock wall, bouncy castles, inflatable soccer, and face painting.

In the exciting Waimanako Duck Race, 3000 rubber ducks race down the Huatoki Stream at 2pm.

A remote-control car course is hosted by the Taranaki Radio Control Car Club on Ariki Street. Nine barbecues are up for sale in a silent auction, raising money for Building Wellness Taranaki.

Live music and performances featuring The Blistered Fingers and a special show by Jack Moser in Huatoki Plaza. To keep your feet moving we will have line dancing and square dancing outside Crowded House, with sessions throughout the day. Stroll through the CBD to enjoy the lovely market stalls, delicious eats, and an infectious event spirit.

Friday, 21 February

Need for Speed – Acceleration Display, 2.30pm: On Albion Street in Hāwera, drivers will showcase their cars' speed and precision in a high-octane display of American automotive power.

Mangorei Road Night Cruise: Locals line the road with barbecues, gazebos, and even creative scaffold stands, transforming their front yards into vibrant viewing spots. The energy is electric, with neighbourhoods coming together to cheer

on the vehicles as they pass.
This year's cruise is generously supported by New World Merrilands and Stumble Inn, which are giving away vouchers to the best-dressed houses, adding even more excitement to this can't-miss experience. Rain or shine, Mangorei Road is undoubtedly a highlight of Americarna 2025.

CBD Night Cruise: As night falls on Friday, the CBD Night Cruise takes centre stage. From 6pm to 9pm, a parade of cars will cruise the streets of New Plymouth's city centre. Immerse yourself in the heart of Americarna's energy and soak up the atmosphere as the night lights up with the parade of spectacular vehicles.

Heritage Train Experiences: A JOURNEY THROUGH AMERICARNA

Steam Incorporated has teamed up with Americarna to introduce a new and nostalgic experience – heritage American diesel locomotives and vintage carriages. These trains, capable of carrying 400 passengers, offer a unique way to enjoy the event.

Thursday: The train departs from Paraparaumu, stopping in Levin, Palmerston North, Feilding, and Whanganui, before reaching Taranaki. Passengers can disembark in Inglewood for the Thursday-night park-up function.

Friday: Locals can join the train to Stratford and Hāwera, arriving in time to enjoy convoys and public displays. The train returns to New Plymouth for the CBD Night Cruise.

Saturday: The train offers scenic trips from Puke Ariki Landing in New Plymouth to Lepperton and back. These short rides, perfect for families, are expected to sell out quickly – book your tickets early!

https://steaminc.org.nz/book-train-trip/explore-taranaki-by-rail/

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Don't miss out on this celebration of American car culture in the heart of Taranaki!

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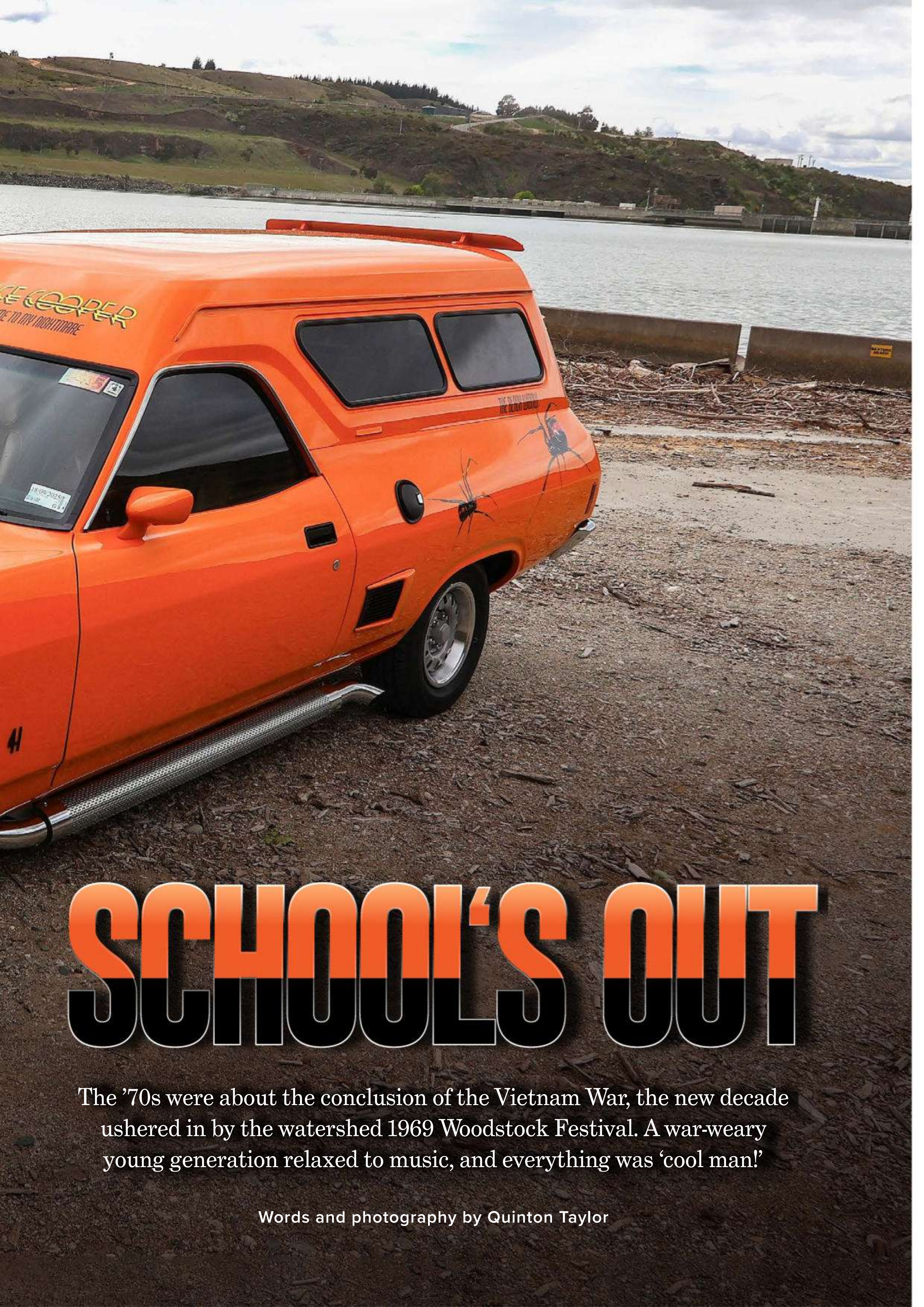
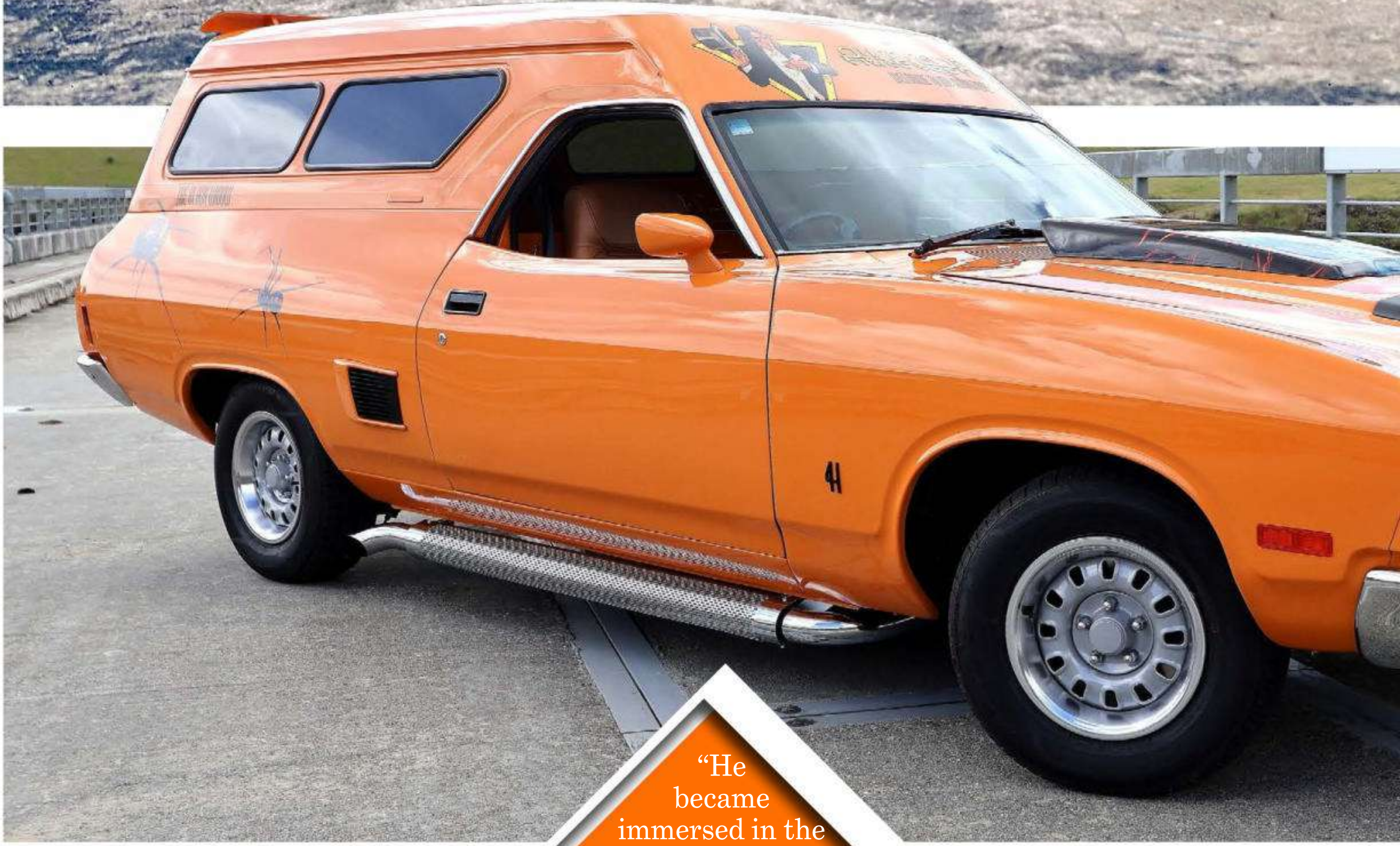

CE COOPER
E TO MY NIGHTMARE
THE BLACK WIDOW

SCHOOL'S OUT

The '70s were about the conclusion of the Vietnam War, the new decade ushered in by the watershed 1969 Woodstock Festival. A war-weary young generation relaxed to music, and everything was 'cool man!'

Words and photography by Quinton Taylor

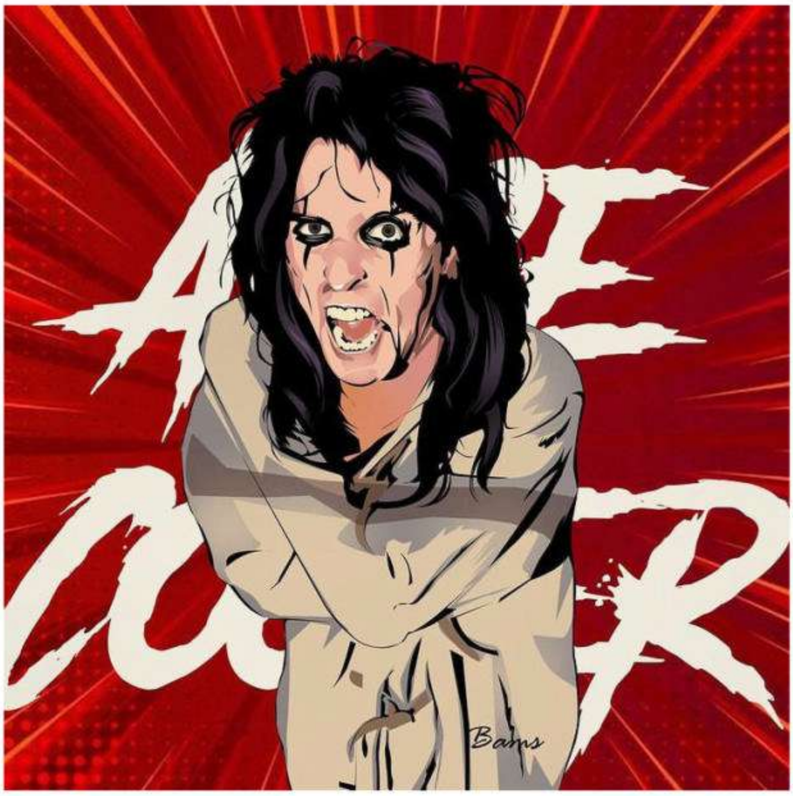
Where it all started: Kombis and surfies, at Right Point, Phillip Island, early '70s (photo: Noel Goldsworthy)

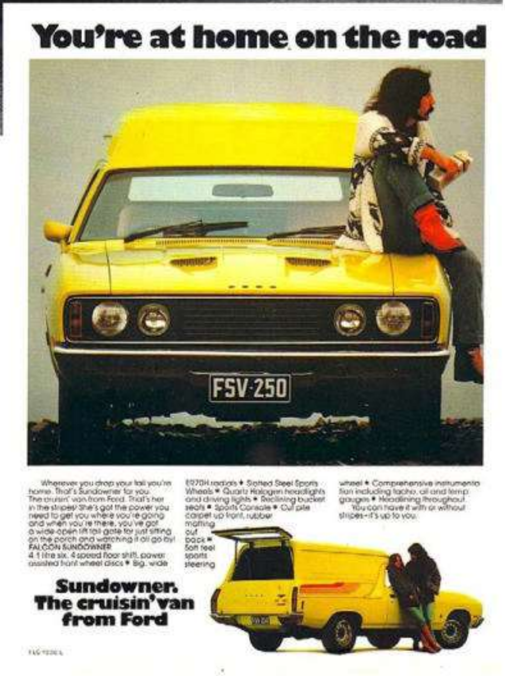


> "He became immersed in the surfie lifestyle, living out of a panel van"

ALICE COOPER
WELCOME TO MY NIGHTMARE

ALICE COOPER FROM THE INSIDE




You're at home on the road
FSV 250

Wherever you drop your tail you're home. That's Sundowner for you. The cruisin' van from Ford. That's her in the stripes! She's got the power you need to get you where you're going and when you're there, you've got a wide-open lift tail-gate for just sitting on the porch and watching it all go by!

FALCON SUNDOWNER

4.1 litre six. 4 speed floor shift, power assisted front wheel discs • Big, wide E70H radials • Slotted Steel Sports Wheels • Quartz Halogen headlights and driving lights • Reclining bucket seats • Sports Console • Cut pile carpet up front, rubber matting out back • Soft feel sports steering wheel • Comprehensive instrumentation including tacho, oil and temp gauges • Headlining throughout.

You can have it with or without stripes—it's up to you.

Sundowner. The cruisin' van from Ford

US president Richard Nixon struggled through the Watergate scandal into eventual resignation. Elvis died, The Beatles broke up, and punk rock exploded onto the social scene, along with disco. Rock music thrived in the high schools and became one of the biggest influences of the time. In 1965, garage rock band The Spiders had its first hit single Why Don't You Love Me. It was the resident band at Stage 7 Teen Club, run by the band's record promoter, Jack Curtis of Mascot Records. Later known as 'Nazz', the band changed its name again in 1968, as another well-known artist had a band by that name. The new name was 'Alice Cooper', and the witch-like persona of the band caught on with its quirky costumes and make-up. Alice Cooper also had its first commercially successful album in 1970. Originally, the band consisted of vocalist Vincent Furnier, Dennis Dunaway, Glen Buxton, John Tatum, and John Speer. Most assumed that Furnier was called Alice, and eventually Furnier formally changed his name to Alice Cooper. Legendary musician and record producer Frank Zappa was looking for a radical group and auditioned the band, and the result was its first three albums released on Zappa's Straight label.

OF SURFING, SURFBOARDS, VANS, AND ALICE!

Dave Dougherty was just 17 when he left the South Island and moved to Melbourne, Australia, in 1974, where he became immersed in the surfie lifestyle, living out of a panel van.

Volkswagen's Kombi was usually the surfie vehicle of choice, along with elderly American vans. It didn't take all three major Australian car manufacturers long to realise that their everyday workhorse panel vans were just the thing for the Australian surfing scene, and they launched the Ford Sundowner/Surferoo, Holden Sandman, and Chrysler Drifter models. They came well-equipped too, like their sedan GT versions, with bright body colours and trim to match the lifestyle.

Beach culture boomed, and many a parent was wary of their daughter's involvement with any surfie who owned a 'sin bin', or 'shaggin' wagon'.

The choice was The Beach Boys or rock, and Dave chose rock, with the American group Alice Cooper figuring largely in his music tastes.

The group, known for its radical live stage acts, lurid attire, and make-up, grew in popularity – as did the panel van scene, as Dave recalls: "I turned 18 in 1975, and I bought my first car, a 1973 XA panel van. Not many 18-year-olds could buy a two-year-old panel van in New Zealand at that time."

Like many, he decided to add a little flavour to the van, and he built a set of cupboards down both sides and over each rear wheel arch. It didn't stop there.

"I lined the back out with blue sheepskins, lights, and a sound system," he says.

He was set to join the surfing, panel van crowd.

DRIVE-IN GATHERING

It was also the era of drive-in movies, a phenomenon that took off in the US, spread to Australia, and was only moderately successful in New Zealand.

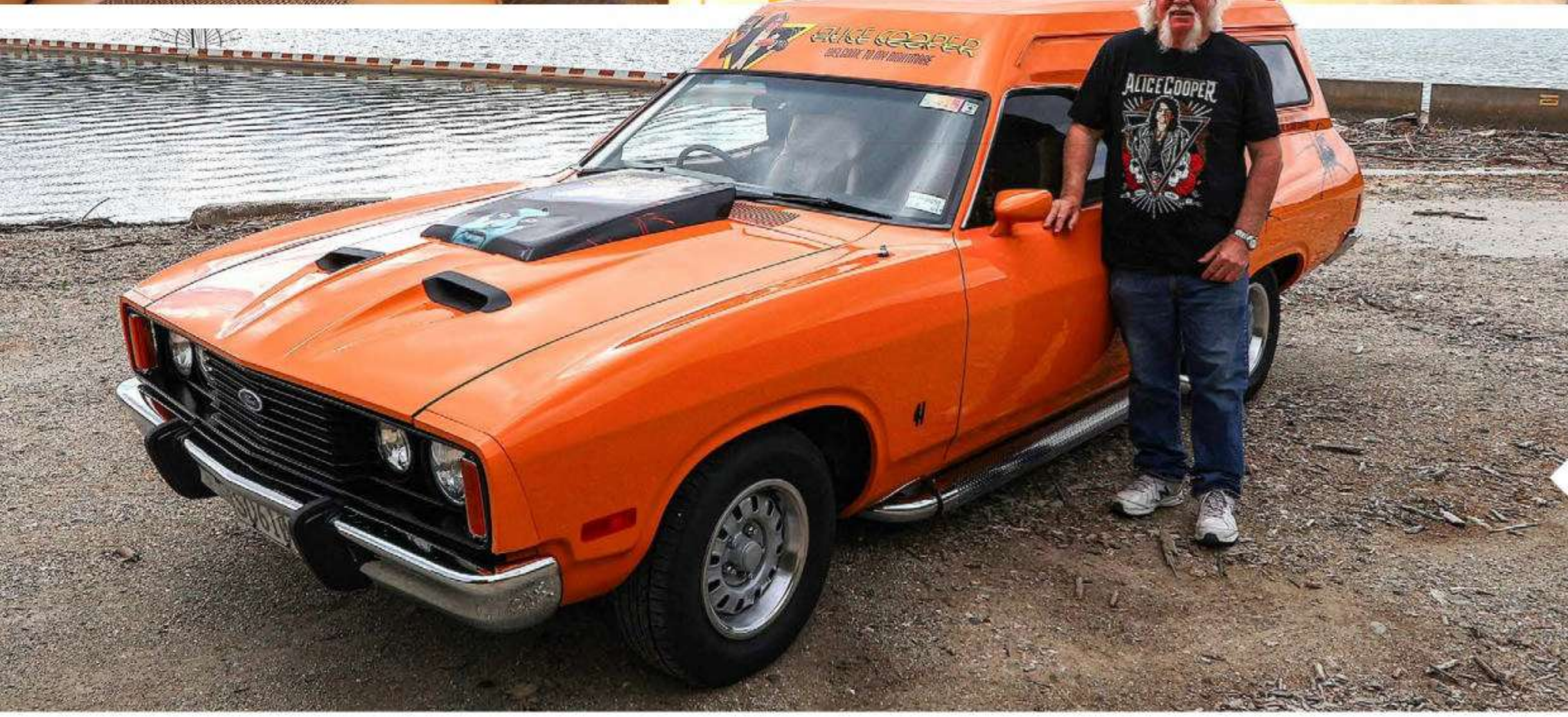
"During the '70s, up to 200 panel vans would turn up at the drive-in, all makes and models. It was an amazing scene," Dave says.

You could arrive anywhere, the word would spread quickly, and a crowd of like-minded people would form in a vibrant social scene.

"My girlfriend – later my wife – Bernadine and I toured around many parts of Australia and camped in the van," he says. "No self-contained certificates were needed back then."

SOMETHING BLUE ON THE HORIZON

Dave was well and truly smitten by the van scene and decided it was time to get serious about his particular set of wheels. What he found became a well-known icon in the van



scene. The previous artist owner obviously knew a thing or two when completing the new van's "striking decorative appeal", as Dave describes it. "After three years with this first van, I decided to upgrade to a 1975 XB GS V8 show van called 'Blue Horizon'. It came with painted surfing scenes and [naked] mermaids painted on both sides. This van had a very hot 302 [cubic-inch] V8 fitted, and it was not easy to drive in heavy traffic."

Dave kept the XB van for a couple of years and then moved back into cars. A keen restorer and driver of American V8s, he has a very rare partly restored Chrysler 300F in his garage, along with a late model Ford Mustang convertible, but there was something missing.

"About six years ago, I was at the McLeans Island Swap Meet [in Christchurch]. It started to rain, so I went into this tent and looked at some car magazines. As I flicked through the pages, I found a photo of Blue Horizon. I took this as a sign: time to find another van," he says.

Perhaps Blue Horizon still existed, so Dave advertised in Australia but without any success. He then began looking locally to see what was available in either XA, XB, or XC Ford Falcon vans.

REKINDLING VAN FEVER

Dave and his family retired to Alexandra in Central Otago, and it would be another two years before he got a lead on a van in the North Island that had been stored for 30 years. It was already well covered in graphics, but that would change.

"After a bit of negotiating, I purchased the van, and it arrived in Alexandra," he says. "It was a project, but unlike some others I had seen with gutter rails shaved off, it was in good order. I then spent a lot of time thinking about what I was going to do with the van."

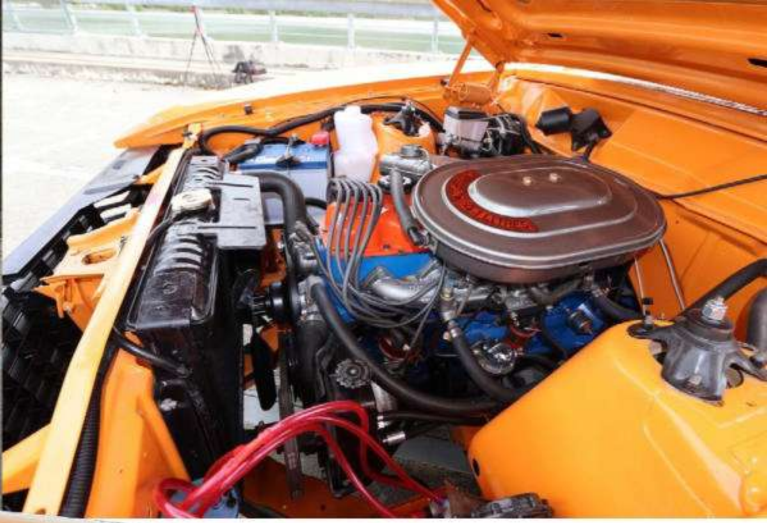
Dave approached a local panel beater, who would do the panel work needed on the van and said this would take about 18 months.

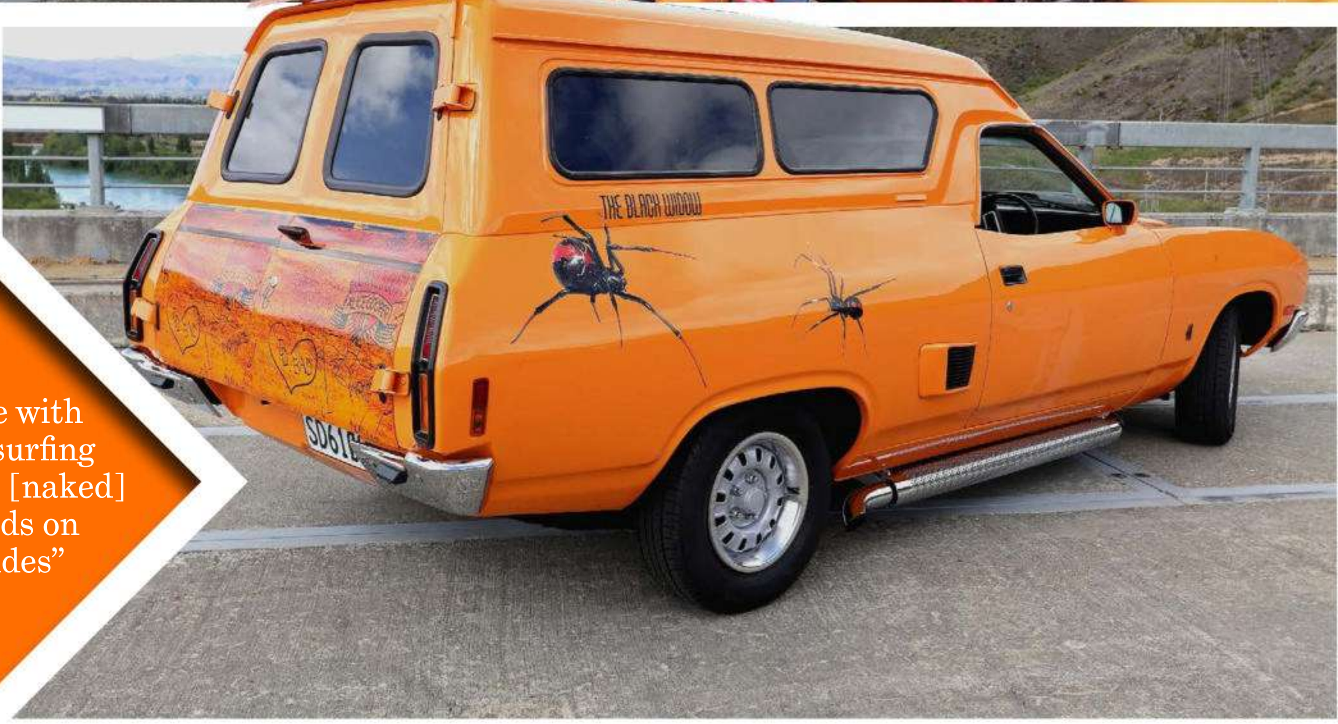
"I stripped the car to bare metal," says Dave. "Primer was then put on to allow the panel beater to do the work and check everything fitted once it was completed."

Once the Ford Raw Orange colour was applied, Dave decided to complete the van in a '70s theme as a tribute to some great days growing up in Australia: "My van would be an Alice Cooper tribute, as I have followed his music since 1975, when I bought my first record, *Alice Cooper's Greatest Hits*. I then studied my '70s album covers and made some choices."

SCHOOL'S OUT!

"The rear van barn doors would have the *School's Out* cover for several reasons: first, I am a retired teacher; the desk had my initials carved in it, 'DD'; I then had my wife's initials, 'BAD', put together inside a love heart. The van sides then had male and female black widow spiders from the song with the same name [Black Widow], sung by Alice Cooper and Vincent Price. Above the windscreen was 'Welcome to My Nightmare'. Mounted on the XC Cobra bonnet scoop, was Alice's head shot from on the *From the Inside* album cover with added flaming hair."





> “It came with painted surfing scenes and [naked] mermaids on both sides”

A FEW PERIOD TOUCHES

Chrome lake pipes were added down each side, and the van received original Ford Falcon 12-slot rims and GT side vents.

“This has been a ground-up restoration, with everything replaced or rebuilt over four years,” Dave says.

Wisely, the decision was made to keep the van’s 4.1-litre six-cylinder engine and four-speed gearbox. The cylinder head was rebuilt and lightly modified so that it could use unleaded fuel, while the block received new piston rings and bearings. A set of musical air-horns was added under the bonnet.

It took some time to get all the parts together. “Not a lot of reproduction parts are available for XC panel vans, and most parts were purchased through Rare Spares in Christchurch,” says Dave.

The seats were recovered in the correct Ford material sourced from Australia. Door cards, centre console, kick panels, and arm rests were all recoloured locally to match the seats.

“New door rubber created a few issues making it hard to close the doors,” he says.

As expected, a number of people have asked why he didn’t put a V8 into it. Dave gives the obvious reply for the two-owner vehicle: “I have left the motor in it that it was born with, and it has only 75,000km recorded on the clock.”

SHOW AND WIN

A member of Dunedin Custom Vans, Dave decided to enter the recently finished van in the Taking Care of Pigment Autospectacular Dunedin 2024, alongside 300 other vehicles from around the South Island. Held each year in the Edgar Centre near the Dunedin waterfront, and run by the Otago Classic Motoring Club in conjunction with the Otago Early Falcon & Fairlane Car Club, the family-oriented event again attracted thousands through the doors to view a glittering array of classic cars, motorcycles, and pickups.

This time, Dave had something to smile about, coming away with the

THE CHRYSLER 300F IS FOR SALE.
Contact Dave at **dougherty46@hotmail.com**.

Best Australian award for the Ford Falcon XC panel van.

VAN CRUISING ’70S STYLE

With the warmer weather arriving, it’s great to be cruising again after weeks of rain, wind, and sometimes snow in the south. Dave’s Falcon is still a little tight in the engine as we head towards the Clyde dam, appreciating the Falcon 4.1-litre six’s familiar smooth beat. There is not a rattle or a squeak anywhere. While the ride is ’70s firm, the overall impression is of a very thorough restoration to as-new condition. Over the years, I’ve driven in this model Falcon for quite a few miles, and I have not encountered a floor-mounted four-speed manual transmission before, but the Ford six has plenty of torque for any challenge.

Massive frameless doors open wide for easy access to a comfortable and spacious cab. In this case, Dave has not only matched the original seat material used by Ford; he has also had the door panels colour-matched instead of resorting to black or any old brown.

Cruising back down the south side of the Clutha into Alexandra, Dave is clearly pleased with his decision to relive his ’70s memories. Unfortunately, any restoration of this magnitude is costly, and something has to go … from the garages.

A while ago, Dave built a few garages on his property to house his cars and an amazing collection of die-cast models, along with many mint pedal cars and wooden models, magazines, and a bewildering array of motoring memorabilia, all in great shape.

Heading the list is a Chrysler 300F, one of the Chrysler ‘letters cars’ built from 1955 to 1965. Partly restored, and with an impressive 413-cubic-inch (6900cc) V8 engine fitted with 15-inch dual cross-ram intakes making some 400bhp (298kW), this car reigned supreme in period in Nascar. For milder cruising, there is a very nice condition Ford Mustang convertible.

Now, that’s the stuff of memories, and what a tribute to the ’70s! ■

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

My family; Nigel Constable; Alan Smith; Steve Chadwick; Fibrenew Southland (recoloured interior panels to match seats); Walkers Upholstery, Alexandra; Rare Spares NZ, Christchurch; HDL AUTO Auto Electrical, Dunedin; ProSigns, Dunedin (designed and installed the graphics); Hill Automotive, Alexandra; Novus Autoglass, Dunedin; Magoo Auto, Dunedin; Otago Tyres, Dunedin

SPECIFICATIONS

1977 Ford Falcon XC panel van
(fitted with GS Rally Pack option)

Engine	In-line six-cylinder, iron block and cylinder head (pre-crossflow; alloy fitted later in XC production)
Capacity	4.1-litre
Bore/Stroke	93mm/99mm
Comp. ratio	7.9:1
Max. power	92kW at 3900rpm
Max. torque	272Nm at 1900rpm
Valves	Two per cylinder, overhead; pushrod operated
Fuel system	Single-choke carburettor
Suspension, F/R	Independent double-wishbone, coil springs, telescopic shock absorbers, stabiliser bar and uprated spring rates for XC, revised bushings, mountings / Live axle, semi-elliptic leaf-spring, telescopic shock absorbers, stabiliser bar
Brakes, F/R	Power-assisted hydraulic 286mm ventilated disc / Power-assisted hydraulic 254mm drum
Steering	Recirculating-ball; optional variable power-assisted steering
Wheels and tyres	Steel rim (standard, alloy optional) and 185 ER70H, SR14 radial
Dimensions:	
Height	1618mm
Length	4935mm
Width	1919mm
Wheelbase	2946mm
Turning circle	12.5m
Colour	Ford Raw Orange
Options	GS Rally Pack with graphics

Driver profile

Name	Dave Dougherty
Occupation	School teacher (retired)
Previous cars	2001 Ford Mustang convertible, Chrysler 300F, various Dodges, Falcon XB panel van, ’59 Cadillac, ’62 Dodge Dart (restored by Dave), ’71 Plymouth Satellite, ’65 Pontiac (daily driver for 10 years in New Zealand), ’60 Chrysler Imperial
Why the XC panel van?	Bringing back the ’70s, surfing, and drive-in movies
Build time	Four years
Length of ownership	Six years
This van’s history	Two owners in New Zealand, 75,000km

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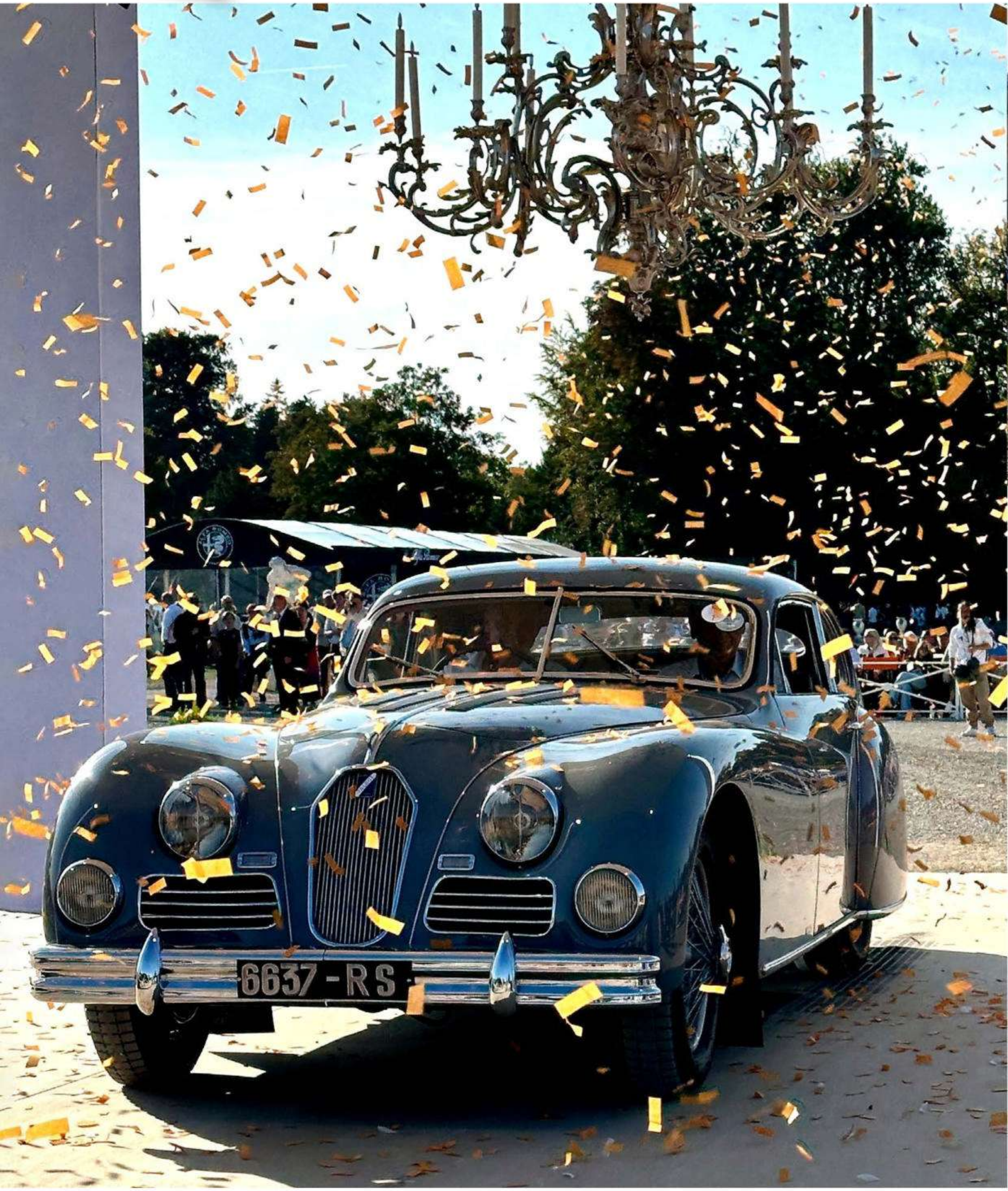


Above: Talbot-Lago T26 GS Antem, body by Saoutchik – post-war Queen of the Day. Above right: The amazing winner – the Lancia Pu+Ra HPE electric concept car

CHANTILLY ELEGANCE

Château de Chantilly provided an amazing centuries-old backdrop for its annual September festival celebrating French arts and elegance

Words and photography by James Nicholls

Call it climate change, call it global warming, call it a shift in long-term natural weather patterns; what I do know is that, in the space of just a few days and a distance of 350km, I went from enduring torrential autumnal rain at the Goodwood Revival to something approaching an idyllic summer at Chantilly just outside Paris.

The weather was not the only sublime thing about this September weekend for the 28,000-plus visitors who descended on the historic Château de Chantilly, one of the finest jewels in the crown of French cultural heritage. There were also 1000 exceptional cars to view across three concours events.

TROIS CONCOURS

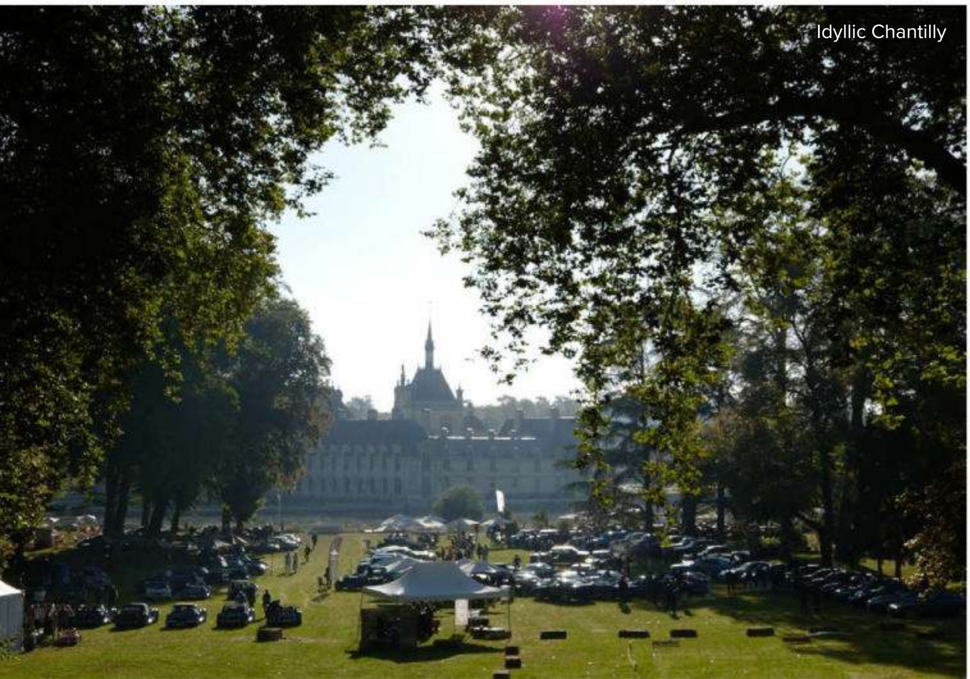
Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille is still all about elegance done with that certain something that only the French seem to be able to grasp properly. It is set amid the splendours of the glorious building and grounds of the former home of Henri d'Orléans, Duke of Aumale, son of the last King of France, Louis-Philippe. This prince, considered to be the greatest collector of his time, made Chantilly the showcase for his countless masterpieces and precious manuscripts. The château survived down through the centuries and remains as it was when the Duke of Aumale gave it as a gift to the Institut de France in 1886, making it the perfect place to take a journey back in time to the heart of a princely residence.

It is now home to a concours d'élégance, a public prize concours d'élégance, and a concours d'état for best of show pre-war and best of show post-war cars, as well as numerous other prizes, including best hat of the day. The wide range of activities and first-class services on offer means that everyone can find something to suit them.

FOCUS ON ALL THINGS BEAUTIFUL

The main theme is, of course, the unique and ephemeral museum of the most beautiful cars in the world. However, the various types of entertainment

One of two Queens of the Day, a 1928 Bugatti T35C


Idyllic Chantilly

offered during this elegant Sunday in the countryside in the incomparable setting of the Domaine de Chantilly will also delight enthusiasts, whether they have a passion for cars or not. And there's so much to see. The entire Domaine de Chantilly welcomes Arts & Elegance Richard Mille: the château; the Grandes Écuries (stables); the Jeu de Paume hotel; the lawns of André Le Nôtre's famous French-style garden; the Hameau, a hamlet-style folly; the English Garden – the whole estate!

There's plenty of room for so many activities in every field: a funfair; craft workshops; horse-drawn carriage rides; a fencing show; magicians; a circus; tap dancing; an equestrian show; hot air balloon rides; pétanque; sailing; and, of course, Chantilly cream with everything.

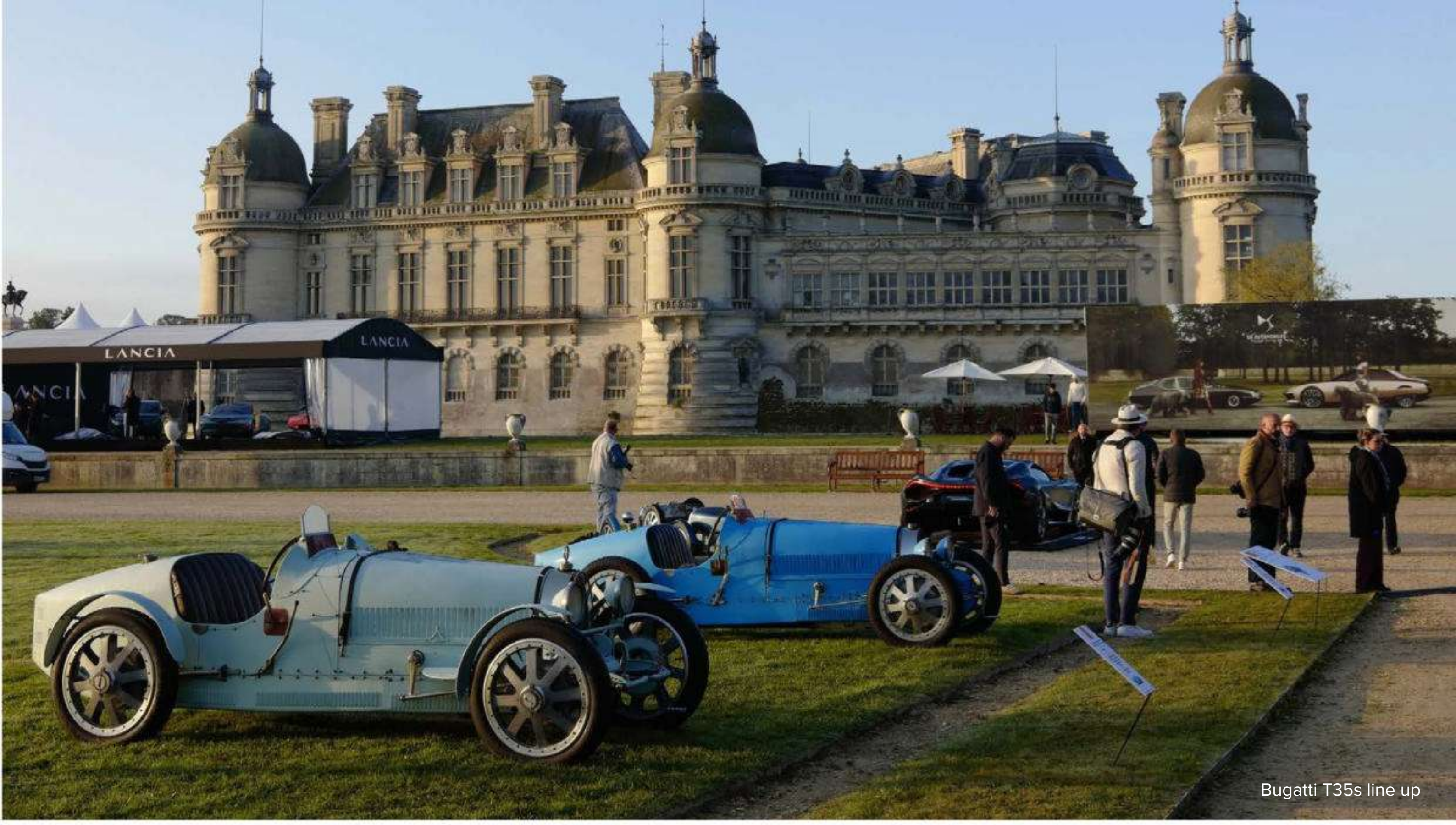
But I was here for the automobiles. France was the cradle of the concours d'élégance in the 1920s and the creator of these very popular meetings in which exceptional cars of the era, often personalised by famous coachbuilders, were on display in the company of elegant women dressed in the latest clothes by the great names in French fashion.

One of the driving ambitions behind Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille was to revive this glorious epoch by inviting car manufacturers and designers to unveil to the public their concept cars, interpretations of the future models of their make, by associating them with models in the most beautiful clothes from fashion houses in a unique parade, which is very popular with the public.

This year, the offerings were from Bugatti; Alfa Romeo, with the Stradale 33 that I had seen earlier in the year at Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este in Italy; Maserati; McLaren; Renault; and Citroën, with its new take on the old SM (why did I sell my 1972 example last year?). The amazing winner was the Lancia Pu+Ra HPE, with its echoes of the legendary Stratos, and not forgetting the stunning Alpine AGTZ Twin Tail designed by master coachwork builder Zagato.

CRÈME DE LA CRÈME

It was in the concours d'état, in which factory originality is paramount, that I was fortunate enough to be a member of the judging team alongside that very same Andrea Zagato. We were tasked with deciding which was the best of the special-bodied post-war Lancias. Ever the gentleman, Andrea refused to pass opinion on offerings from his own company, including the 1993 Hyena that he had himself penned. The winner of this class went to the amazing 1955 Lancia Florida coupé designed by Pinin Farina



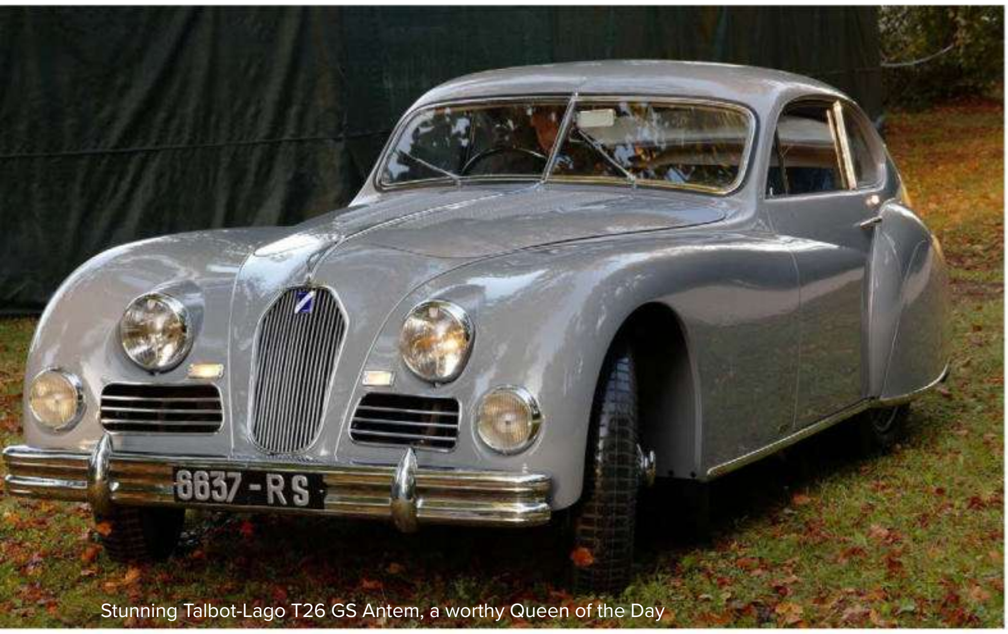
Bugatti T35s line up

“Château de Chantilly, one of the finest jewels in the crown of French cultural heritage”

Lamborghinis tempting the crowds

Arts and elegance on display

The ball beckons!



Stunning Talbot-Lago T26 GS Antem, a worthy Queen of the Day

Citroën's new take on the SM

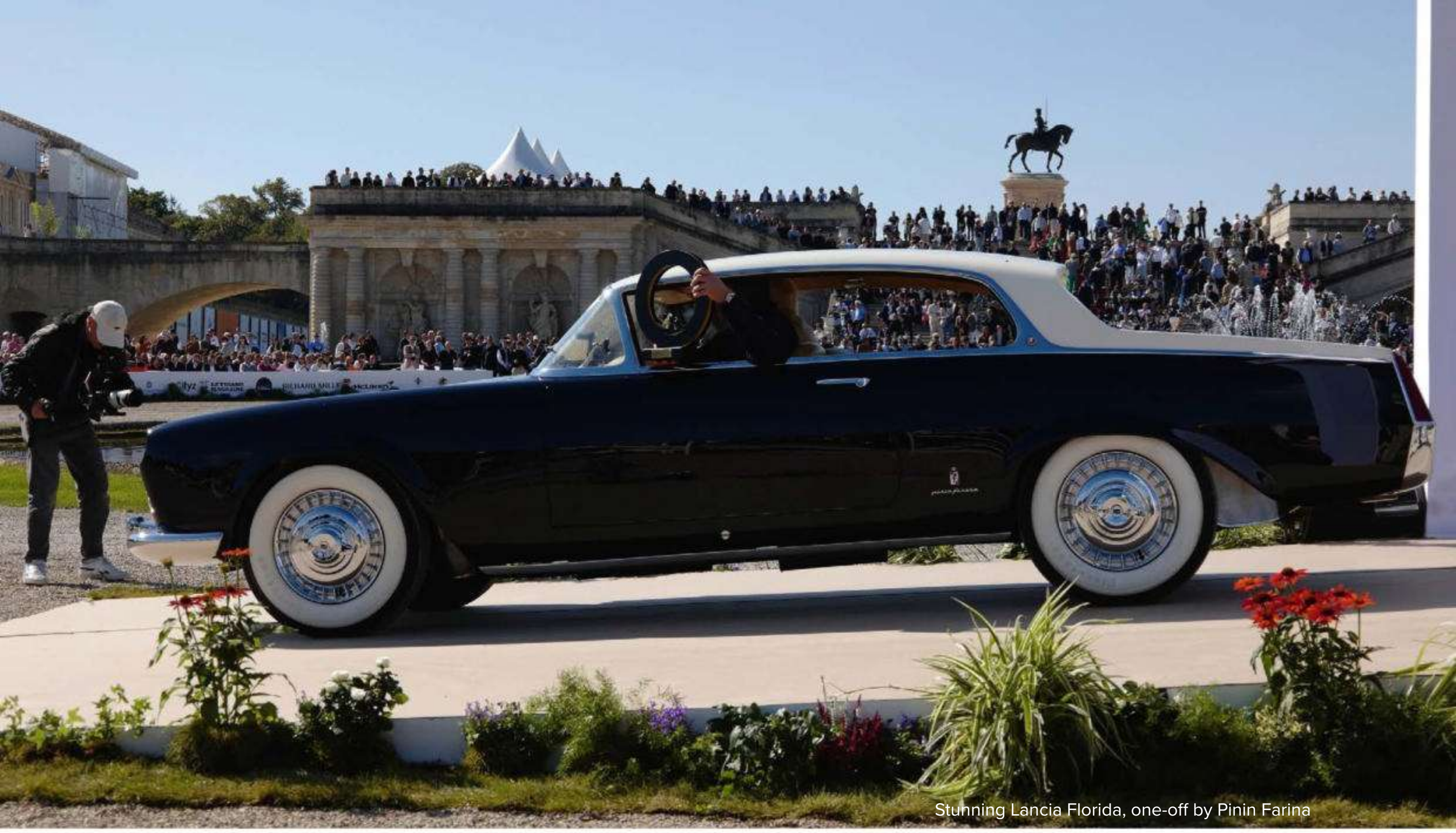
(still two words before the decree that would connect them). This stunning two-door, with its waistline stretched by the wing-tip lights and a recessed rear window equipped with windshield wipers, is a true one-off. The standard of all the cars across all the classes, and, indeed, the judges overseeing them, was truly amazing. In each of the 17 classes comprising some four or six cars, rareness, history, state of conservation, and upkeep are the main criteria considered by the hand-picked jury when examining the cars to select the class winner, an obligatory step to find contenders for the final Queens of the Day consecration.

Those two Queens, one pre-war and one post-war, were almost unanimously agreed on: a supercharged 1928 Bugatti T35C that had run in the Targa Florio and emerged as victor of the Bugatti class, picked as a tribute to the 100th anniversary of the Bugatti 35 and the late collector Peter Mullin. The post-war selection was the incredible, amazing, 1949 Talbot-Lago T26 GS Antem designed by Saoutchik. This car had blasted past me the previous day, hotly followed by a Ford GT40, when I was seated in the backseat of the 1971 Maserati Quattroporte Prototipo by Frua on the marvellous tour to the polo fields for another gastronomic luncheon.

With everything topped off by a masked ball in the château itself with copious champagne on the Saturday evening, what was not to enjoy? Vive la révolution! But not just yet, please, as I am still savouring the Chantilly cream cake. ∎

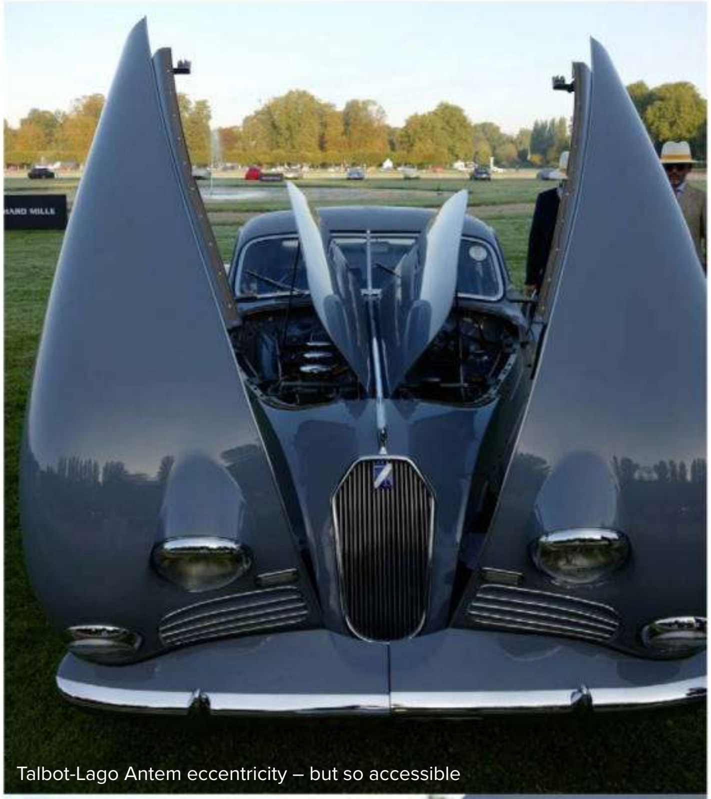
Time for a different kind of horsepower

A little help from my friends



Stunning Lancia Florida, one-off by Pinin Farina

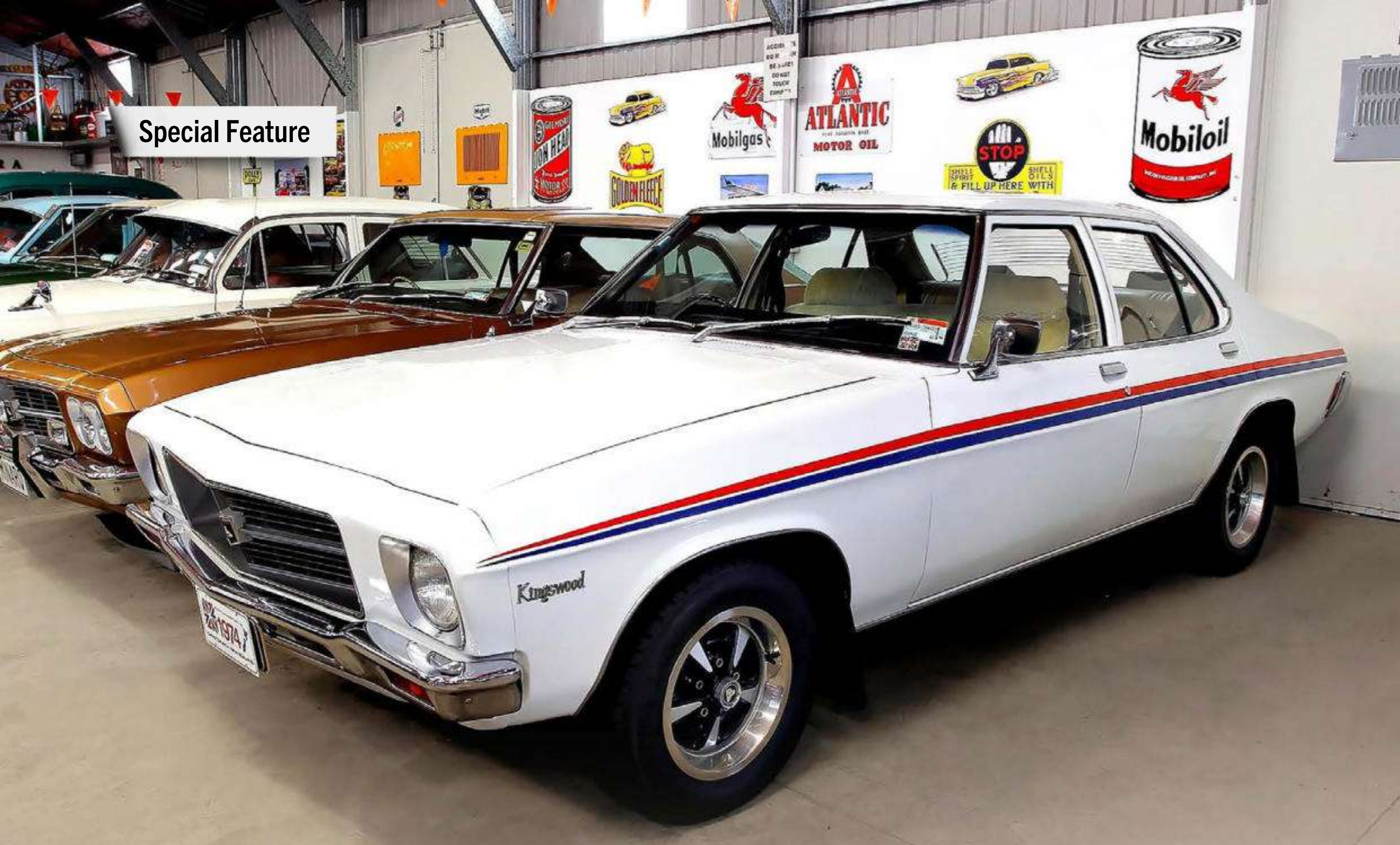
“The standard of all the cars across all the classes ... was truly amazing”



Talbot-Lago Antem eccentricity – but so accessible

A relaxed and dapper Andrea Zagato enjoying the Chantilly sunshine

Supreme accessibility



THE GAMES FLEET

HOLDEN KINGSWOODS

The biggest challenge for any international event is funding. The 1974 Christchurch Commonwealth Games, led by Sir Ron Scott (1928–2016) is still the only Commonwealth Games to ever finish with a profit

By Nigel Young, photographs supplied and by New Brighton Museum

One of the biggest challenges Sir Ronald Scott faced when organising the 1974 and 10th British Commonwealth Games in Christchurch was fundraising. Selling hoardings for advertising was against the rules – but sponsorship wasn't.

CAR DEALERSHIPS SUPPORT

To this end, Toyota New Zealand came to the party with 25 mini-buses and three rental vans, while General Motors (GM) loaned 181 cars, of which 169 were Holden HQ Kingswoods, plus 12 Holden Statesmans for VIP use. Twenty-seven Yamaha motorcycles ranging from 50cc to 80cc were also hired, while 22 – mainly school – buses, from outside the district were under contract.

Standout vehicles were the Holden HQ Kingswoods provided through local Holden dealer Blackwell Motors Ltd, delivered all in white and with the games' famous red and blue livery. They were fitted with mag wheels, a 253-cubic-inch (ci) (4146cc) V8 engine and the GM three-speed Trimatic gear-box.

Above: A 1973 Holden Kingswood and 253ci V8, 1974 Commonwealth Games Special – this one last seen at the Yaldhurst Museum of Transport

Kerri Nevin and her 1974 Ford Escort, which is similar to those used with games Holden Kingswoods, at the Christchurch Town Hall

ARMY PRECISION

To run these, 11,500 gallons (52,280 litres) of fuel were donated by all the oil companies of the day, while a further 7300 gallons (33,186 litres) were bought. The games' transport logistics were run by Major NC McPherson of the New Zealand Army, assisted by four army officers.

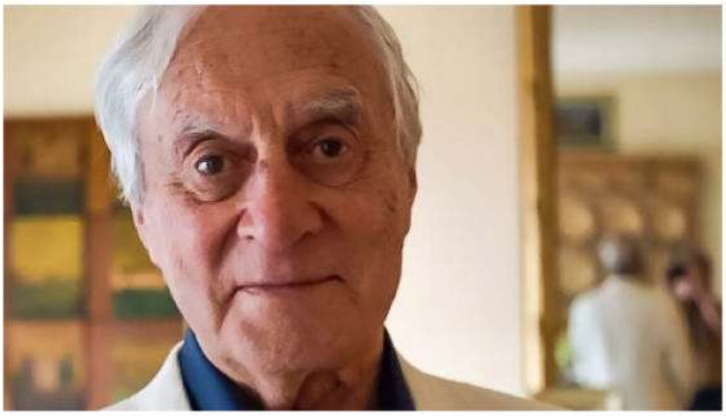
Around 500 volunteer drivers, of which 125 were men and 375 were women, attended both defensive driving and orientation courses. A total of 269,556 miles (432,913km) was recorded by the cars and vans. The transport logistics alone were incredible. Helicopters were deployed for both the opening and closing events, while 16 cars had radio telephones for the emergency control of both games and service vehicles.

FRESH MEMORIES OF 50 YEARS AGO

I remember seeing the HQ Holden courtesy cars that were everywhere throughout the games as a teenager in Christchurch. That was 50 years ago. I managed to track down Jill Price, a driver. At 83, she can still fit into her games uniform and she recalls a memorable time: "I was allocated a VIP car to drive Dr Harold Henning from US, president of FINA ([Fédération Internationale de Natation] swimming) and I drove him to the opening and closing ceremonies, and all the swimming sessions at QEII pool. At the conclusion, he took a photo of me and the car. He sent me a letter, but unfortunately I cannot find the photo. I am still looking for it, as it was something special. I still have the letter."

She goes on to write: "I have no idea of the model of the car but it was an automatic and I think it was two-toned. Lighter above and darker below – just long and very powerful. I had never driven an automatic car when selected and my husband arranged for his friend to let me drive his automatic car around the block. The car was parked at Kirkwood Intermediate School overnight. Fifty years have flown by and the occasion was a wonderful experience." ■

Queen
Elizabeth II
Park
Stadium and
Sports Cen
Christchurch
New Zealand



Sir Ron Scott

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XB Falcon Continental

QUEENSLAND TRIFECTA OF CAR MUSEUMS

Vaughan takes a detour from his usual travels in the US for a brief sojourn into the Sunshine State and a visit to three car museums

Words and photography by Vaughan Wilson

Queensland, the land of sun, sand, and holidays, is a growing and developing area of Australia and the home of the 2032 Olympics. It's also home to a deep-rooted car culture. Queensland's car culture splits its time among classics from Australia; the US; Europe; Japan; and, of course, Great Britain. Some of these vehicles were obtained over generations when values were modest, while others were purchased in recent years from the riches the Queensland State remunerates to those who take risks.

SEVEN82MOTORS

There are a number of car-based attractions to whet the appetite, including a trifecta of car museums, automotive auctions, and displays. The first of these is Seven82Motors. It is the brainchild of Queensland local Ben Atkinson.

Ben is a self-styled car fanatic who has been passionate about cars as long as he can remember. It probably started when his dad bought a slightly second-hand 1976 XB GS Falcon Coupe. Ben loved that car, and so did his dad. This was back in Adelaide in 1979. His dad sold the Falcon when the family moved from South Australia to Queensland. Ben eventually found that original Ford and presented it to his dad before he sadly passed away.

USEFUL SKILLS

Throughout his teens, Ben and his mates drove Australian V8s of all descriptions, and it was then that Ben discovered that he had an almost encyclopaedic capability to retain car facts, automotive minutiae, and specific model iterations that would hold him in good stead in his future endeavours. Ben dabbled in rebuilding cars, selling cars, importing cars from the US, and basically fine-tuning his skills. He has had a long interest in the US tradition of consignment; in other words, selling on behalf. He especially likes the auction method of connecting willing seller to a pool of willing buyers.

FORAGING FOR US CLASSICS

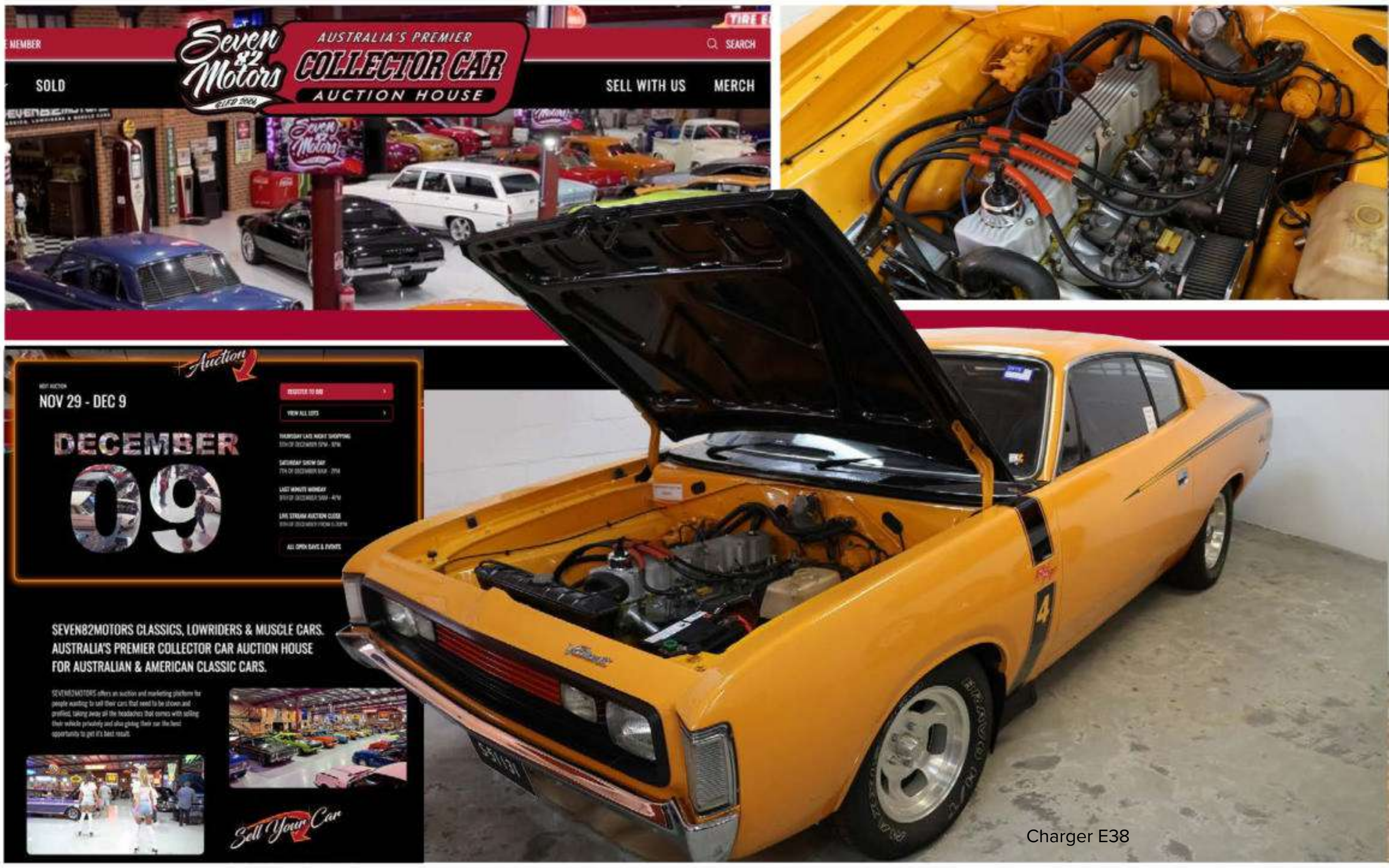
Ben has been a regular visitor to the US over the years, initially buying cars to import and more recently to visit Disneyland for car guys: the Barrett-Jackson auction, particularly the mammoth event in Scottsdale held in January each year. It's not uncommon for Ben to return from the auctions with a haul of cars and memorabilia to ship home.

Ben has another rare skill. He has an eye for perfection and knows how to create an event. His business, Seven82Motors, now in its third and largest venue since starting in 2006, is at 2 Palings Court, Nerang, a short drive from Surfers Paradise.

AMERICAN GRAFFITI

Ben took a heavily partitioned warehouse, stripped it out, and created a car-crazy environment straight out of the US, with its own barber shop and in-house barber on open days; a hotdog restaurant; a museum; feature walls from New York, Las Vegas, and more; an old gas station; and other details from the good old days. He also bought a former Ruby's restaurant from California, relocated it in the Seven82Motors premises, and called it 'Big Benny's'. →

> "Ben discovered that he had an almost encyclopaedic capability to remember car facts"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Charger E38

Rather than hamburgers, it specialises in hotdogs, helping create an American vibe and energy on open days for visitors. Attractive girls on roller skates round out the 1950s theme.

IN-HOUSE REFURBISHING

Underneath the main auditorium is another level fitted out as a workshop. Ben has five in-house mechanics working on customer cars, restomodding and refurbishing. Ben loves the Americana theme, with Petronlina and Coke/Pepsi machines lining the walls. He also has a love affair with neon. Over the years, he has purchased countless neon signs from the US and these adorn the walls and hang from the ceiling. They really help to create an environment and atmosphere, and the rainbow of colours fills out the ceiling and compliments the shiny red cars at floor level.

Ben and his team have created backgrounds of Las Vegas, New York, an old town gas station, and other retail from the good old days. These too help create the wonderful venue.

AUCTION TIME

Six times a year, he holds an auction of the finest US and Australian cars that he finds from around the 'lucky country', selling on consignment. He is very particular, with all the cars for sale being in the finest condition. Australian cars make up around 60 per cent of those for sale, with around 50–70 cars at each auction.

The auctions are run online, but with prior special open days and special events as auction viewing days, with the livestream auction closed and only for potential buyers or followers. Ben spends a lot of time coordinating the look of the venue and colour-coding the cars to maximise their presentation. Two differences from the Barrett-Jackson auctions are that they are held in front of a live audience in massive indoor venues with a stage and seating. All vehicles are sold without a reserve price. Ben, however, provides an amazing environment in which prospective buyers can inspect the vehicles, but all cars are sold over the internet via the auction process, and many have no reserve.

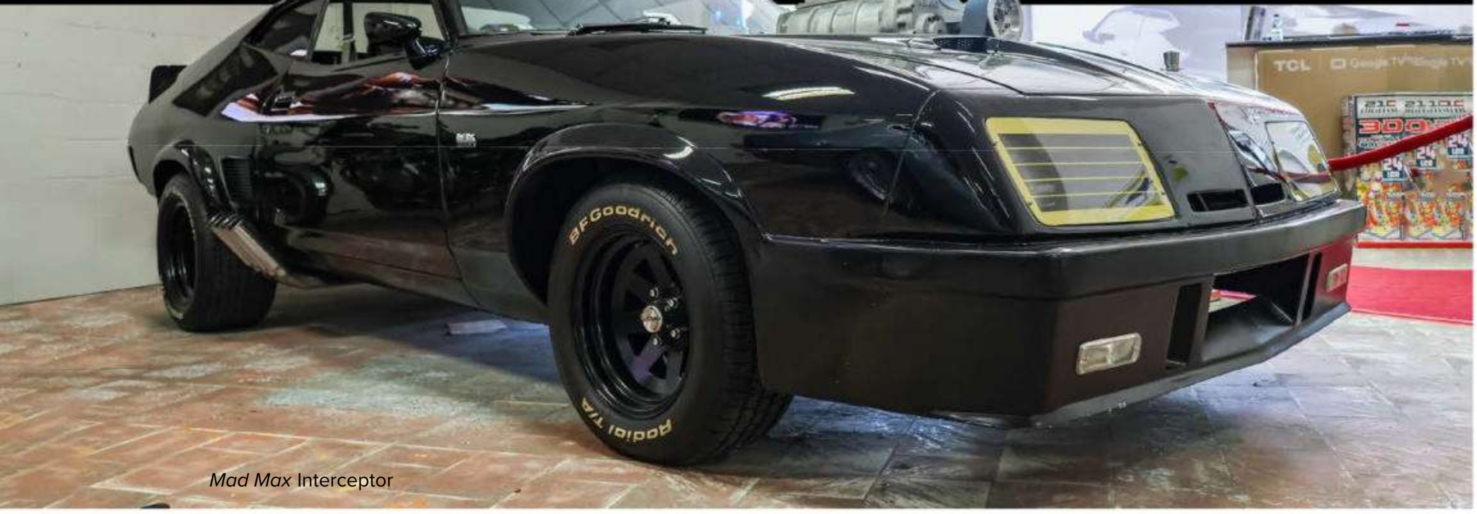
AN INTERNATIONAL CLIENTELE

Customers come to Ben from all over the world, including from Australia,

BIG Benny's
Coca-Cola
Coca-Cola
Coca-Cola
COLD
NER

Mad Max Interceptor

> “Ben has another rare skill. He has an eye for perfection and knows how to create an event”



Mad Max Interceptor

New Zealand, Indonesia, and even Europe, buying cars in the internet auction. Ben charges buyers and sellers in a similar fashion to Barrett-Jackson, with an 8.8 per cent buyer’s premium and an 8.25 per cent seller’s premium. He has spent a lot of time getting his website to present the cars before the auction, and remind the buyer of the clock ticking down to the final hammer. The marketing is first-rate, and the viewer of the website can log on to see what the prices have risen to prior to the auction closing, what the high price was after the auction, what sold, and what was passed in. Previous auction results are on the website too.

MUSCLE CAR MUSEUM

The second museum to visit is the Muscle Car Museum at 76 Bundall Road, Bundall, Surfers Paradise. This smaller venue is dedicated to Australian-made muscle cars from the 1960s and ’70s. If you grew up watching Bathurst; pressing your face against the glass at Chrysler, Holden, and Ford dealerships; and avidly reading magazines featuring these Aussie classics, then this museum is for you.

MAD MAX’S COUPE AND OTHERS

Pride of place at the entrance is a 1977 Falcon XC Coupe tribute to the *Mad Max* Interceptor movie car. This car has been lovingly restored and transformed into an Interceptor, just like the nitro-supercharged and side-pipe-bedecked car that Mel Gibson drove in the famous 1979 movie that started his career. This isn’t the only Falcon Coupe, with an ultra-rare XB Continental Edition in canary yellow also on display.

Other Fords include a XY GT replica, an absolute copy of an original down to the minute detail. The Blue Oval was also represented by the 1970 XY Fairmont GT. A few of these have come into New Zealand recently. They were only sold in South Africa, and the current exchange rate and dry climate in South Africa has seen a number of Aussie-derived V8 classics sold there being imported back into Australia and New Zealand.

Falcons were sold in South Africa in the 1960s but got a bad name for reliability, although the Fairmont still sold well. Ford used the Falcon GT from Australia with the 351 Cleveland

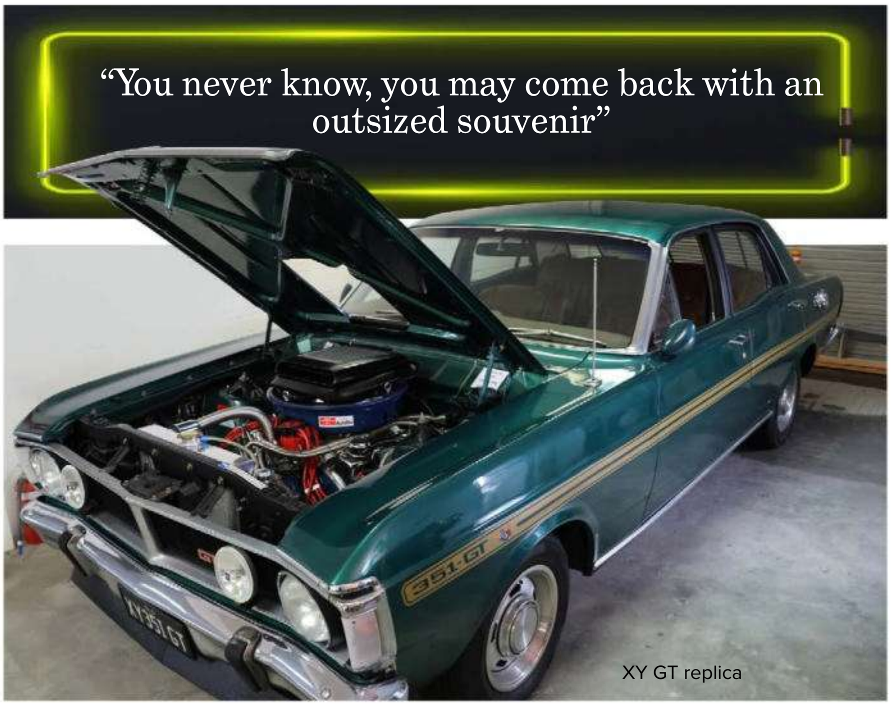
Torana SLR 5000

engine, emblazoning the car with Fairmont badges and Fairmont features, and it sold in limited numbers in the Rainbow Nation.

Finding a good one is not easy, but they sell well and for high dollars in both Australia and New Zealand, and this museum has a very fine example on display.

Fairmont GT

“You never know, you may come back with an outsized souvenir”



XY GT replica

Monaro 350

MOPAR MAGIC

Chrysler is not forgotten with a 1971, 770 manual six-cylinder model in orange. This car was launched on the back of the highly successful, bigger brother Charger in the US from 1968 to 1970 (think *The Dukes of Hazzard*). This fine example is highly unusual, as it was ordered as a manual gear change from the factory with a column change instead of a floor change, but it kept its bucket seats. Adjacent is a second orange Charger, also in excellent condition. This one is also a six-cylinder, an R/T E38, and again in orange. The “Hey, Charger!” slogan used to successfully launch the car echoes in the ears, as these two cars are displayed nose to nose.

GM MUSCLE

Holden, however, badged the majority of vehicles in the museum, nestled in and around motorbikes, pinball machines, a Scalextric car set-up, and other memorabilia. Everything from the original FX and FJ saloons that helped cement the brand in the Aussie psyche to the muscle car heroes of the 1960s and ’70s, with Monaros in two- and four-door form; a One Tonner ute; and, of course, the Torana. Monaros include a barn-find HK 186-cubic-inch (ci) (3048cc) six driven by nuns until it was parked up in 1981, a manual HX four-door, and a really nice 327ci (5359cc) V8 HK.

South Africa features again with a 1971 HT. Sold as the ‘Chevrolet SS’ – previous models were sold as ‘Monaro’ – this was the last of the HTs, which could not be exported due to a 1971 Australian Government ban over apartheid. A loophole, however, existed on selling parts rather than whole cars to South Africa, so the ‘Aussie Chevy’ was exported to South Africa in parts. Assembly was carried out there, with a few US parts thrown in such as the front grille. This is another barn find in unrestored condition with a 308ci (5047cc) under the hood.

GOLD COAST MOTOR MUSEUM

The final site to visit for the automotive enthusiast is the Gold Coast Motor Museum, 10 minutes from touristy Mount Tamborine. This museum was opened in October 2020 by two brothers, Carl and Grant Amor. It has an eclectic collection from all over the world totalling 75 cars and motorbikes. Sadly, I didn’t get to visit, as I was under orders from my five-year-old to see the fun parks.

If you are thinking of visiting Brisbane and the Gold Coast but worried about overdoing the rollercoasters and sunburn, check out the museums, and the Seven82Motors website for its next open day. You never know, you may come back with an outsized souvenir, or at least some happy daydreams while sipping on a cocktail. ■

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NUMBER PLATES

Greg's column Price On often sparks a bit of discussion and the vexing question of where to put inflexible licence plates on the likes of an E-Type Jaguar's svelte nose, an Alfa Romeo's dainty prow, or let's not get started on where you put them flatteringly on the front of a Lexus or Audi. It's something not easily resolved. **– Ed.**

Sir,

From Issue No. 395 Sept./Oct. 2024

What is Greg Price going on about, outlawing non–New Zealand made licence plates? Under the *Road Code* they have always been illegal, subject to a fine and, at one time, demerit points. See: www.nzta.govt.nz/vehicles/licensing-rego/number-plates/

Under Number Plate Offences it states: "Only plates issued by Waka Kotahi are legal, which means you can't make your own plate. Displaying a non-approved plate or something that could be mistaken for a plate could mean a maximum fine of $5000."

Although this is another one of those things like misusing foglights that only the most zealous police officer follows up on.

Regards,
Mike W

Greg's reply:

Yes, he is correct – to a point. The point I was making was that over time, various interested parties have lobbied the NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) to allow variations of the standard New Zealand–made plates for a variety of reasons. The first variations were to accommodate European vehicles where, for cosmetic reasons, a European-style plate would look better, as the number plate area was designed for longer European-sized plates. Hence, longer plates were allowed, featuring the added distraction of a logo or similar at each end.

On our 1959 Cadillac, a six-digit plate did not fit well in the space designed specifically for stubby American-styled plates. On our 1962 Thunderbird, we 'personalised' a pair of Hawaiian plates that cost US$25.

More recent Japanese vehicles also do not accommodate New Zealand plates particularly well, hence Japanese vehicle enthusiasts can now get Japanese-styled plates, albeit New Zealand-made.

My point was that while I can pay $1200-plus for a legal, locally made New Zealand plate, why couldn't I use an American-made plate that looks exactly the same but costs much less?

I appreciate that the law currently states that non–New Zealand made plates are illegal, but, given the many different types of vehicles currently on the roads here, that came from countries with differing styles of plates. As long as the plate can be read, and subsequently identify the vehicle, what is the problem – other than it is not made by a New Zealand monopoly business charging monopoly prices?

On an E-Type Jaguar, as I mentioned, there is no practical place to fit a standard plate without restricting the cooling function of the small open space at the front, hence owners choosing adhesive sticker plates. Are they really not able to be read by speed cameras, when the new, small, white-on-black plates have been authorised?

There's an old adage that goes something like this: "In many cases, the law is an ass." This is one of them.

Cheers
Greg

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Motor Sport Flashback

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

The Tasman Series had a 12-year life from 1964, meaning that, sadly, the first two months of 1975 brought down the curtain on what was once the second-most-important open-wheeler road racing championship in the world – behind only the world championship

By Michael Clark; photography by Aaron Mai and from George Begg Collection and *New Zealand Classic Car* archives

Those 12 years were split evenly between the unique 'Tasman formula' for racing engines of up to 2500cc, and the final six years for the mighty Formula 5000s. The Tasman formula years typically coincided with late starts for the world championship, meaning that the world's best were free to head down to this part of the planet to enjoy the delights of the Antipodean summer that easily trumped a Northern Hemisphere winter.

NAME DRIVERS FOR THE ANTIPODES

Jim Clark won half of the first six Tasman titles, with the others going to Bruce McLaren, Jackie Stewart, and Chris Amon when the support acts included world champions like Jack Brabham, Phil Hill, Graham Hill, Denny Hulme, and Jochen Rindt. It was a seriously big deal. And then everything changed. In 1969, 11 races counted for the world championship, but in 1970 there were 13, and driver salaries were on the rise on the back of the recently introduced concept of commercial sponsorship. The Tasman Series power brokers on both sides of the ditch made a pragmatic call – Formula A was in, and that probably meant farewell to the superstar names.

BACK IN THE US

In 1965, North America embraced the 1.6-litre Lotus-Ford Twin Cam engine as a power plant that would slot perfectly into the back of a British Formula 2 (F2) or Formula 3 chassis. To differentiate the American scene from Europe, the new category was called 'Formula B'. The idea was sufficiently brilliant to be adopted by both Australian and New Zealand, where we called it 'the National Formula' – maybe because if we had a Formula B, it implied there must be a 'Formula A' – and that would just be plain confusing. Whatever the reason, we never called those gorgeous little things 'B-cars' like the Americans did – and still do.

Prior to 1968, Formula A in the States was a sick joke – old Formula 1 cars and bitzers that could be beaten by a well-driven 'twin-cam'. Then came an idea so brilliant that it was a wonder it had never previously been actioned, and then they turned it into a category.

FORMULA 5000 IS BORN IN THE US

It's not as if the ingredients had just turned up. The heart of the car was five-litre stock-block V8, which the US just happened to have an abundance of. A range of engines was nominated, but in the inaugural season, all eight rounds were won by cars powered by the Chevrolet small block, a situation that pretty much prevailed until the final year of the championship in 1976. →

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“All eight rounds were won by cars powered by the Chevrolet small block”

TIM BUSH
McLAREN CARS
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Frank Matich won once with a Repco-Holden in 1972, and Jackie Oliver got a win for the Dodge-powered Shadow in that final year, but every other stock-block victory, from 1968 to '76, went to the all-conquering Chevs. Formula A, universally renamed 'Formula 5000' (F5000) by the time of the 1970 Tasman Series, was never a happy place for Ford fans. I once asked Graham McRae if the FoMoCo boys had approached him to run a Boss in his GM1, could he have turned it into a winner?

The three-time Tasman champion, who also won the North American championship in 1972, thought for a moment before responding with, "How much money are we talking about? And why did the name change?"

TRANSATLANTIC F5000

In 1969, the British added the five-litre small block V8–powered category to its impressive list of championship options, but Formula A was a meaningless concept in Europe – so hey presto! – Formula 5000. The brilliance of the name wasn't lost on the North Americans, and so what had been 'A-cars' when those entrepreneurial promoters at Bay Park – the old Bay Park – brought out four of the monsters in December 1968, became 'F5000s', and now hardly anyone remembers Formula A. Power levels grew from circa 300kW to at least 400kW from 1968 to 1976, although as Kenny Smith often quipped with respect to the 5000s, "torque was always more important than horsepower".

Reliability was an issue throughout the category's life, although was rarely a problem for well-prepared teams that had good drivers who didn't over-rev.

THE FINAL TASMAN

Once again, the organisers assembled a good field for the final Tasman, although we didn't know it was the final then – previous champions Chris Amon, Graeme Lawrence, and Graham McRae led the cast, with international support from Australians Kevin Bartlett, Warwick Brown, John McCormack, Max Stewart, and Johnnie Walker, but sadly that was it.

Al Unser was promoted as a starter but was a no-show, while the Europeans also gave the series a miss.

Ken Smith had finally decided to ditch the 'two-litre F2s' and bought a 5000, while the other local hope was Jim Murdoch in the latest creation out of George Begg's Southland 'Toyshop'. David Oxton, who'd won the previous three New Zealand Gold Stars, acknowledged that his old Begg was now past its prime, and so he was on the sidelines – at least to start with.

The 1974 Tasman Cup had been won by Peter Gethin and his VDS Chevron B24, with team-mate Teddy Pilette in third, winning three of the eight races between them. McCormack won once with his Repco-powered Elfin, while the other four rounds were taken by Lola T330/332s.

In the 1974 American series, Lolas won all seven rounds, but across the Atlantic, things were a bit more interesting, with Lolas winning 11 of the 16 races. The new, and only mildly upgraded, Chevron of Peter Gethin went close to the title with four wins, while Vern Schuppan won the other, also with a Chevron.

FORMULA LOLA?

However, the writing was on the wall. F5000 was fast becoming 'Formula Lola'. Lola had been in the category since the start with its T140, a rather blunt-looking device. It was handsome, following the front-radiator architecture of 1968, but not a thing of beauty. The mildly upgraded T142 followed in 1969, while the 1970 offering, the T190, followed the marque's obsession with short wheelbases that prevailed across the range at that time. The T192, another front-radiator design of utilitarian appearance, was an attempt to provide some normality, with some additional inches between the wheels.

The 1972 T300 was a major departure – side radiators that sat unusually high, meaning a wedge-style nose, but then came the T330 and 'wowsers' said it was gorgeous. It was longer; the radiators sat lower; and by the time refinements had been incorporated in the 1974 T332, the airbox had become not just big but outrageously big.

Lola didn't know that it'd already created the ultimate 5000 with its T332 and ploughed on with a new car. The T400 was, if it were possible, even better looking than its predecessor, but that was where the positives ended. Lola wasn't the first manufacturer to try to master rising-rate suspension, but customers were soon trying to convert back to conventional T332 suspension or attempting to buy back their recently sold 330s or 332s.

1975 LOLA FORCE

Before F5000 was finally killed off, Lola made one more attempt to make a car better than the T332 when the T430 was unveiled. Three

SAS Autoparts

Left: Tim Rush's McLaren M22

(1) Jim Murdoch and Begg 018, Manfeild, 1974. (2) (Left to right) George Begg, Clare and Jim Murdoch, Rob Allen, Dale Porteous, and Alan McCall – second in Lady Wigram Trophy Race, Wigram, 1976. (3) (Left to right) Alan McCall, Joe Wright, George Begg, and Jim Murdoch – testing new fuel-injection system with Begg 018, Teretonga, October 1975. (4) George Begg and Jim Murdoch (at right of photo) with Begg 018, George Begg Tribute Weekend, 2007

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were built – and, incidentally, all live in Canterbury – but as contemporary F5000 was about to be given the last rites by the Australian authorities, Lola T332s were still a handy weapon of choice.

The 1975 New Zealand Grand Prix (NZGP) at Pukekohe saw 14 cars face the starter – a dozen F5000s and a couple of two-litre F2s. Six of the 5000s were Lolas, then pairs of Beggs, Elfins, and McRae designs. Unsurprisingly, one of the McRaes had Graham in the cockpit, while in the other sat Amon, who was highly complimentary: "At least as good as the Lola, and a lot safer."

In 1974, a deal was done that saw McRae sell his design to an American. The car would be renamed the 'Talon MR1' and the designer would be lead driver. However, the deal crumbled, and McRae only raced a Talon once before joining the ranks of Lola pilots. The two champion Kiwis were both starting their last NZGP from the front row, although neither knew it at the time. In years to come, the weight difference between the Talon and McRae GM2 was mentioned on the odd occasions that the two legends met, but while McRae never confirmed the quantum, there is no doubt that his car was lighter than the Talon.

McRae was on pole the previous week at Levin in the first round of the championship; no surprises there. It was the place that Warwick Brown had headed to mid-week when he'd heard the Kiwi was testing.

This admission was first shared at Phillip Island in March 2008, when McRae was visiting to watch the now-historic 5000s. Brown revealed that he'd taken binoculars and hid, or so he thought. "I needed to understand how you drove Levin – it became an obsession for me." McRae's response was priceless: "Were you laying the ground on the outside of Hokio Bend?" The Australian nodded. "I thought there was someone

“‘Formula 5000’ (F5000) by the time of the 1970 Tasman Series, was never a happy place for Ford fans”

there spying on me,” he said. “I never knew it was you until now.”

Brown was second behind Lawrence, another Levin specialist. The first non-Lola was the sixth-placed Jim Murdoch in the new Begg 018. Australians had won every NZGP since we adopted F5000 and now Brown joined his compatriots Frank Matich, Niel Allen, Frank Gardner, and John McCormack.

Murdoch’s second was Begg’s best Tasman result, and George recorded the achievement in his autobiography, *When the Engine Roars*: “Against some of the fanciest F5000 machinery in the world, we had managed to take second place in the NZ Grand Prix, a particular pleasure for me came when he [Jim Murdoch] was awarded the Bruce McLaren Memorial Trophy for the first New Zealander home. In front of Jim’s Auckland home crowd, Bruce’s father Les, made the presentation in memory of a man for whom we both had worked and for whom we had so much respect. To celebrate Jim’s first major success, the party-making went on late that Sunday night.”

TASMAN HALFWAY POINT IN 1975

McRae and Amon shared the front row in both South Island races, with Graham winning at Wigram and Chris at Teretonga. With the final Tasman half over, the points table was led by Brown and Lawrence with 15 points each, while Walker and McCormack both had 13. Brown, Lawrence, and Walker (all in Lola T332s) shared the rostrum at Oran Park, then Walker won at Surfers Paradise while the other title contenders finished out of the points. Lawrence, Brown, and Walker, in that order, again shared the rostrum

in Adelaide, meaning that all three, remarkably, would head to the final round with 30 points apiece.

Walker put his Repco-powered Lola on pole for the final round at Sandown Park on the outskirts of Melbourne. Brown was alongside Lawrence, fourth quickest on the second row – four-tenths covering the three title contenders.

As 'Shag' Lawrence recalls, South Australian Walker was "seriously wound up" and was lucky to survive a massive first lap crash that resulted in his Lola demolishing 50m of horse track rails. Walker died in 2024 aged 80. Lawrence and Brown then both experienced problems. The Kiwi retired with nine laps to run, but Brown managed to recover for sixth, the valuable single point giving him the championship.

BRUCE McLAREN
MOTOR RACING TEAM

F5000 WINDS DOWN

The traditional four races in New Zealand in January, followed by four races in Australia, continued in 1976, but each country ran its own championship. The Tasman Cup was over. Ken Smith won the New Zealand series and was second in Australia, winning three of the seven rounds that were run, six being won by Lolas and one by a March.

The Kiwi F5000 drivers were not consulted when the New Zealand governing body made the decision to drop the category in favour of a local version of Formula Atlantic for 1977.

The Australians decided to stick with F5000 and continued with their February dates until 1979, even inviting F1 cars for the last two years, but while there were attempts to adopt our 'Pacifics', and revive the Tasman Cup, F5000 still wouldn't die.

In the US the category had given way to the single-seat Can-Ams from 1977, the last year that the 5000s were permitted to run in the UK championship, but it wasn't until 1982 that the last 'contemporary' F5000 race was run in Australia.

It had been great while it lasted but has had a significantly longer life as a historic category than it ever had in period. Did the poor reliability finish it off and would greater success have been enjoyed had a Chev versus Ford edge existed? Whatever the answer, the sad reality is that the first two months of 1975, a mere half a century ago, signalled the beginning of the end for the once wonderful Tasman Series.

HAMILTON CAR CLUB TURNS 75

The Hamilton Car Club was formed late in 1949 and Jim Ganley, father of future F1 driver Howden, was the first president. To celebrate its 75th Anniversary, a highly enthusiastic crew put on an excellent function in mid November.

MC Brian Kelly interviewed a panel comprising Jim Palmer (a club patron) and Graeme Lawrence. It was all run at an easy pace, with plenty of humour but, most importantly, a clear reminder of how vital the grass roots club membership is to our sport.

RON AND NAOMI

And, speaking of the contributions in time, effort, and skill of car club members, it was wonderful to be back racing at Manfeild in the MG Classic in November. For various reasons, it had been six years since the yellow Crossle had been able to get there. It's hard to imagine that event without Ron Robertson and Naomi Berg. They seem to be over everything and I hope they both realise how much we all appreciate what they do to make this memorable event happen. ∎

"It's hard to imagine that event without Ron Robertson and Naomi Berg"

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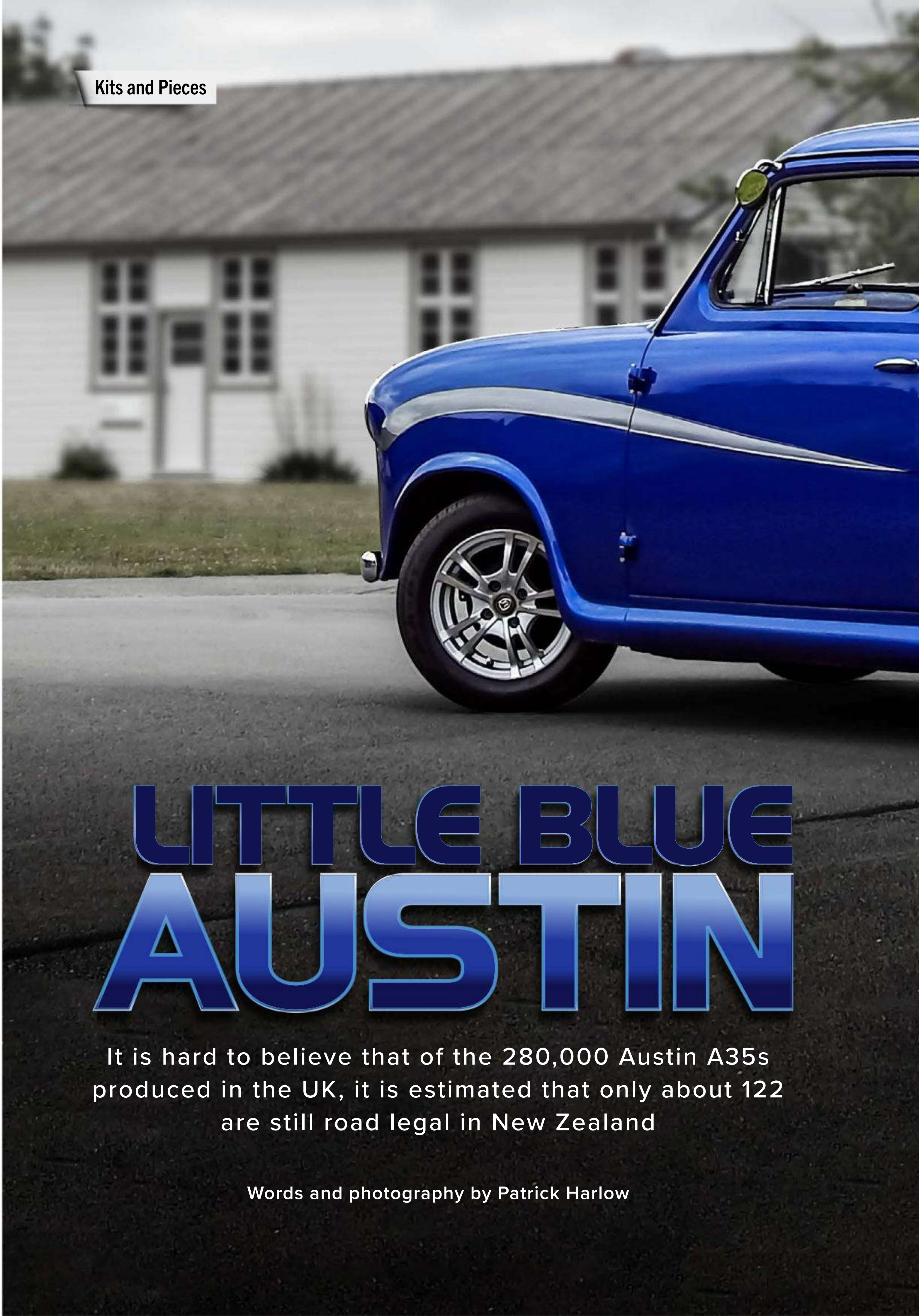


LITTLE BLUE AUSTIN

It is hard to believe that of the 280,000 Austin A35s produced in the UK, it is estimated that only about 122 are still road legal in New Zealand

Words and photography by Patrick Harlow

The A35 went into production in 1957 as a more powerful and facelifted version of the Austin A30 (1952–'56). They would be eventually replaced by the Mini in 1959, although the van version of the A35 would continue until 1968.

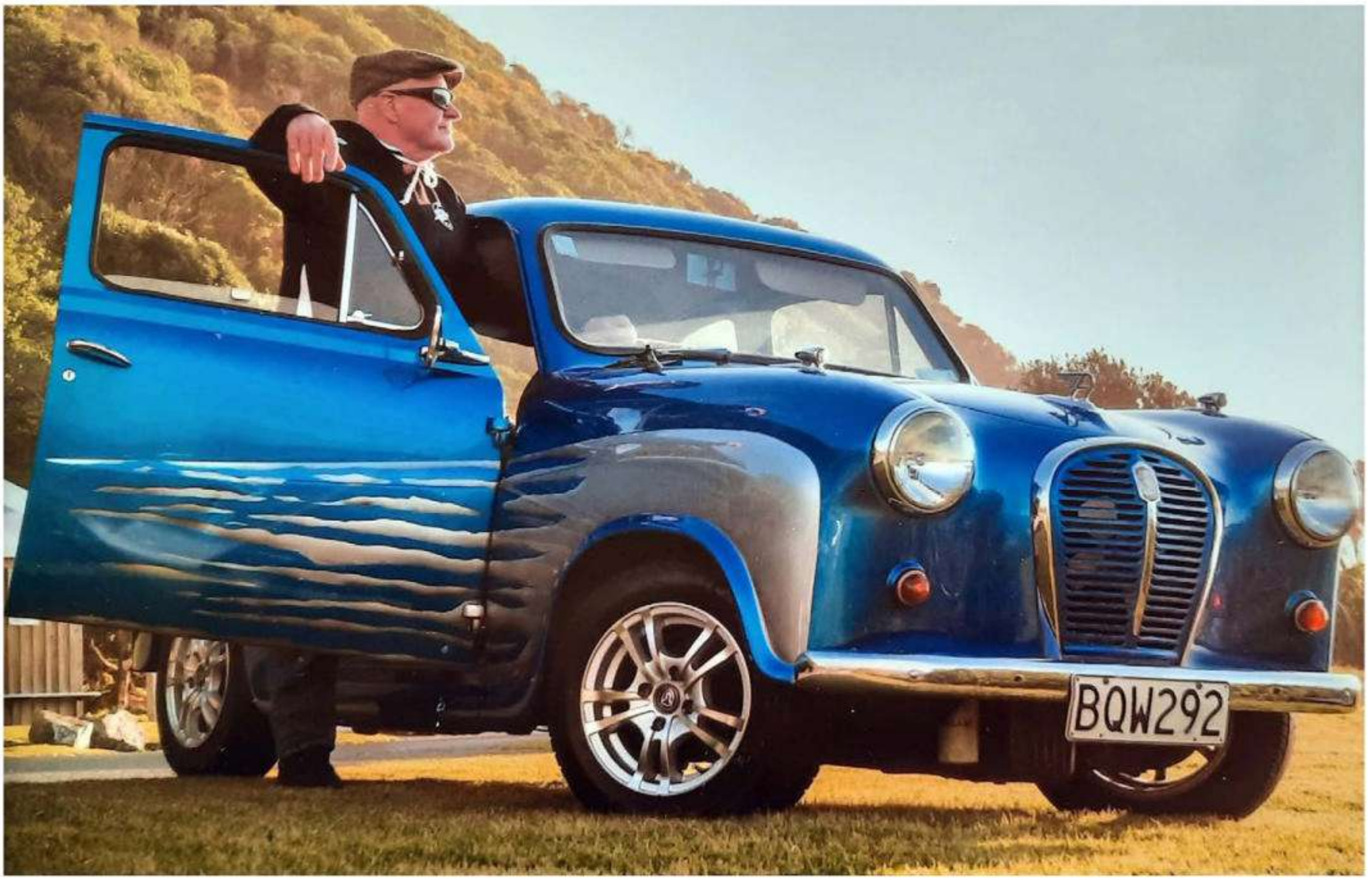
The A35 came with a bonus 5bhp (4kW), which is bigger in percentage terms than it sounds, lifting the power to a heady 34bhp (25kW) and delivering a higher top speed and better acceleration. 'Acceleration' might give the wrong impression, but its speed could be increased from a standing start to 100kph in a patient 30 seconds, with the little 948cc engine topping out at 115kph a week or so later. That being said, the A35 sales brochure of the day bragged about the car's ability to drive on the German autobahns at 100kph for 40,000km without a sign of trouble.

Besides more power, the A35 also came with other modern features such as blinking indicators, which had to be turned on and off manually via a switch at the centre of the dashboard. A35 vans still used the older style flip-out trafficators operated by the same centre switch. These cute little cars were produced as a two- and four-door family car, a two-door estate called the 'Countryman', a two-door inner-city van, and as a ute/pickup capable of hauling about 1.5 tonnes.

BRITISH MOTOR INDUSTRY AT ITS BEST

This was the heyday of the British car industry. The UK was finally starting to manufacture cars that the working man could afford, and they were bought in their thousands. The A35 was never a big car, but it was a popular family car in the day. The most popular model was the two-door saloon. Back then, two-door did not mean sporty or fast; it meant cheap. Having two fewer doors meant that it had fewer parts, making it easier to manufacture and cheaper to buy. The back windows simply pivoted outward on a small hinge. More expensive cars had window-winding mechanisms, but to keep costs down, the A35's windows were pushed up and down using a chrome bar on top of the windows.

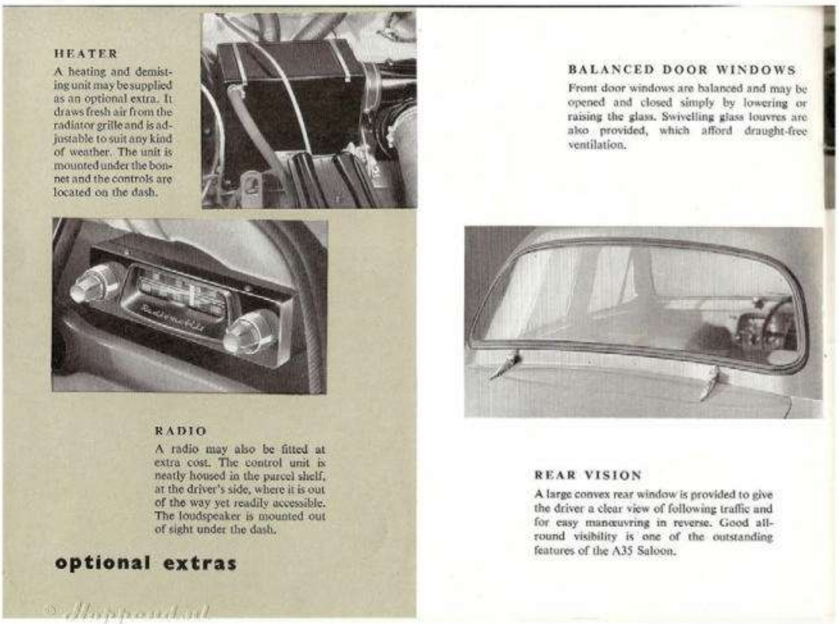
The four-door car was obviously more versatile, but even then the main rear door glass was fixed, and the only ventilation offered in the back was via the rear quarter-light window. Those wanting two more doors had to find an extra £20 to £30, a lot of money back then. If they wanted to splash a bit more



cash, buyers could opt to have a heater or, luxury of luxuries, a radio.

You may be wondering why I am writing about a 70-year-old car in Kits and Pieces. Well, this month's car is not as it seems. Many of the parts in this car are not 70 years old and neither were they made in the UK. This little Austin makes it into this column because it is a restomod, assembled from a lot of non-original and more modern 'pieces'.

This blue car is owned by Joe Moon, a gentleman who has lived in Upper Hutt since the mid '80s. Back in 1981, he bought a beaten-up Austin A30 for about $180. It was in bad shape but still mechanically driveable,



HEATER

A heating and demisting unit may be supplied as an optional extra. It draws fresh air from the radiator grille and is adjustable to suit any kind of weather. The unit is mounted under the bonnet and the controls are located on the dash.

RADIO

A radio may also be fitted at extra cost. The control unit is neatly housed in the parcel shelf, at the driver's side, where it is out of the way yet readily accessible. The loudspeaker is mounted out of sight under the dash.

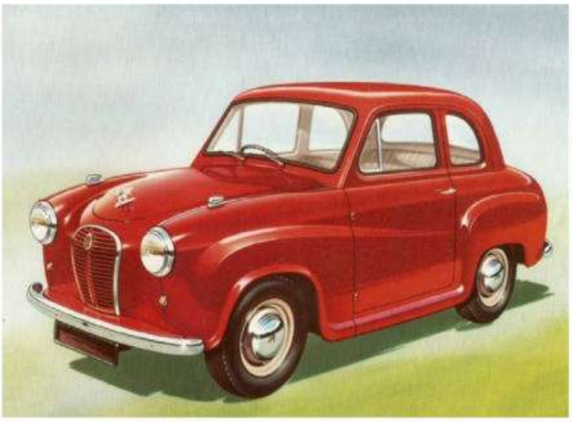
optional extras

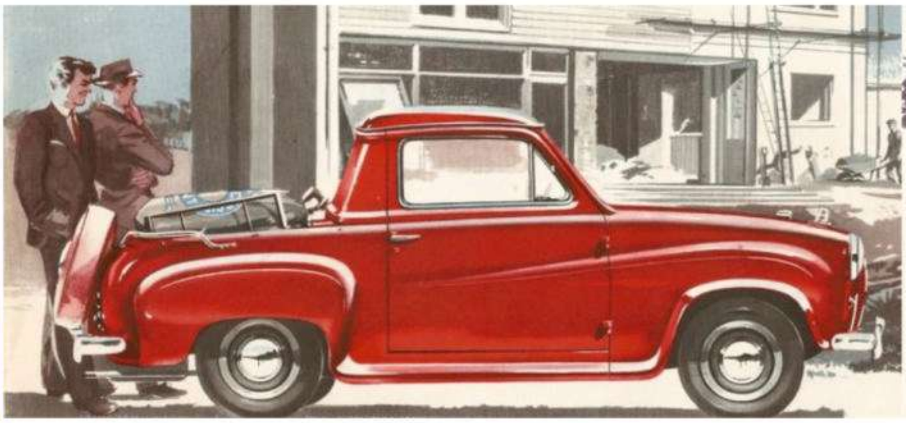
BALANCED DOOR WINDOWS

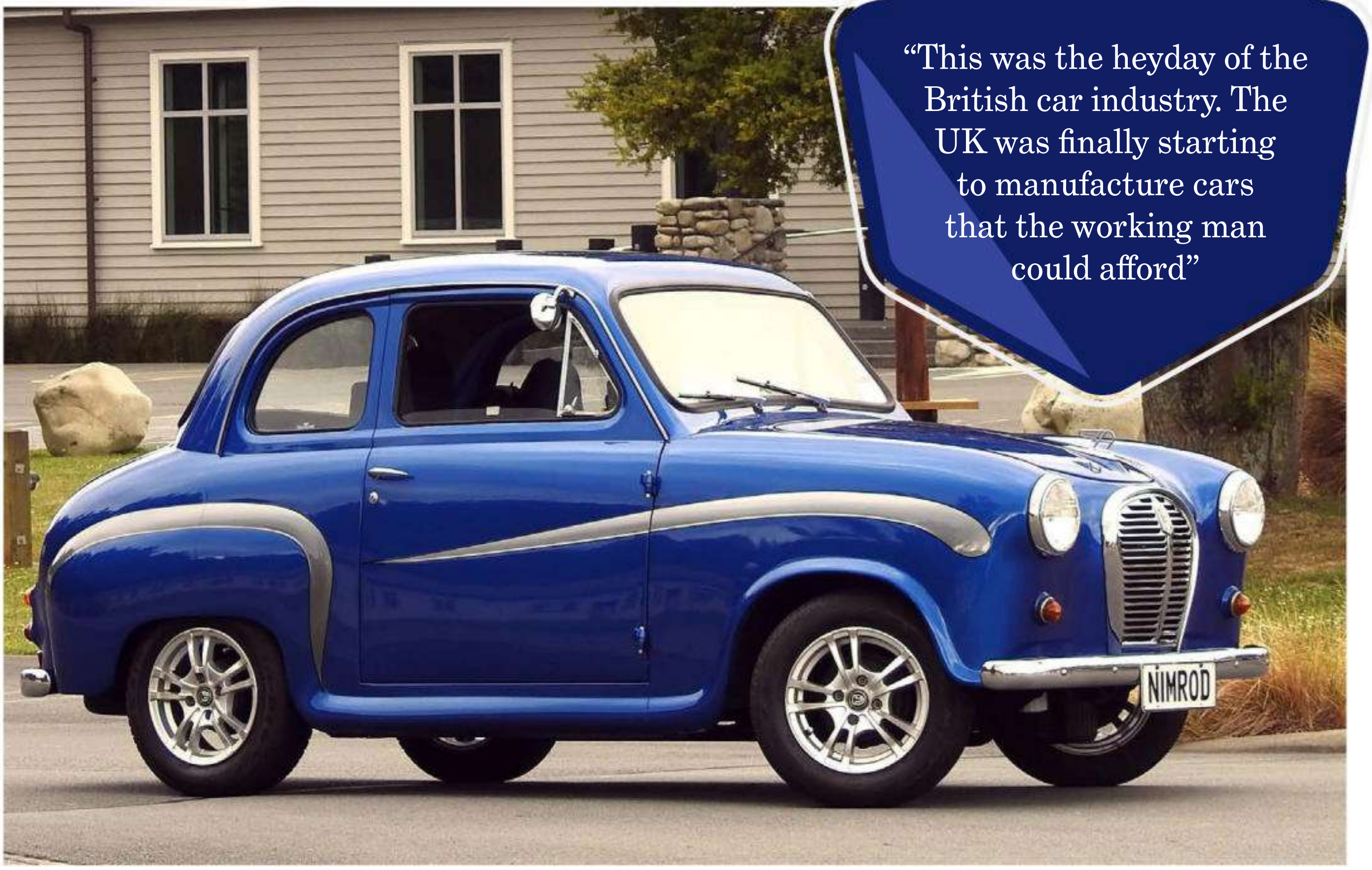
Front door windows are balanced and may be opened and closed simply by lowering or raising the glass. Swivelling glass louvres are also provided, which afford draught-free ventilation.

REAR VISION

A large convex rear window is provided to give the driver a clear view of following traffic and for easy manœuvring in reverse. Good all-round visibility is one of the outstanding features of the A35 Saloon.







> “This was the heyday of the British car industry. The UK was finally starting to manufacture cars that the working man could afford”

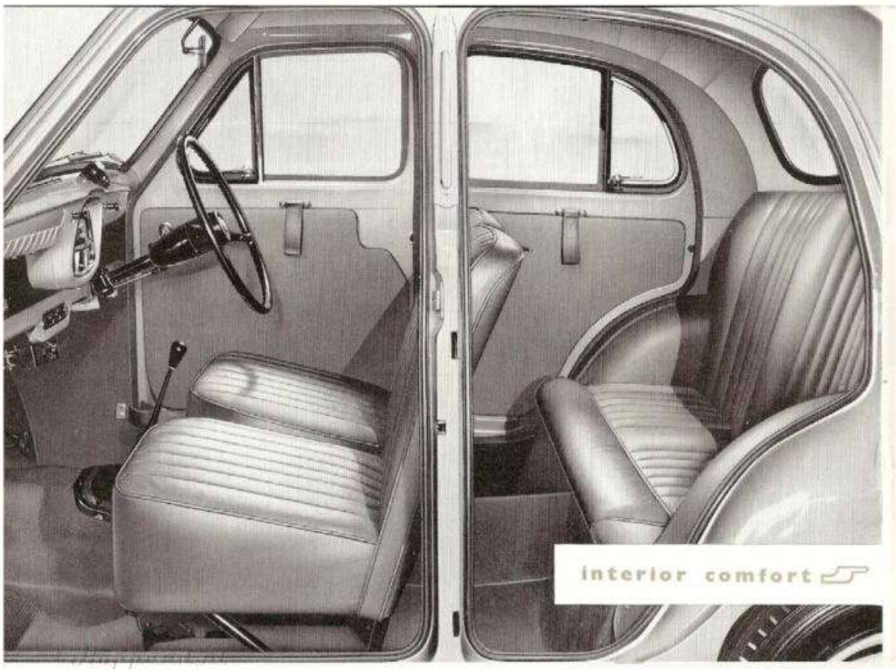
so Joe decided to use it as a motorised wheelbarrow. All the seats apart from the driver’s were taken out, leaving space for such things as garden shrubs purchased from the local garden centre. It was also used for picking up bags of concrete and did several tip runs. Surprisingly, considering there was less of it, he sold it for more than he paid for it. Given the amount of rust in it, he thought the car had very little time left before making its last journey to the tip.

IN SEARCH OF A PROJECT

Years later, when Joe was approaching retirement, he was looking for a car that he could drive around and tinker with. Looking back at all the cars he had owned, he thought of the A30. Although the most beat-up, it was one he remembered fondly and actually had fun driving. It was too distinctive to be lost in a car park, and, being an old-school mechanic, he thought that it could be an ideal project car.

Not surprisingly, many of the people who now own these cars have the same opinion, so it is not often that one comes up for sale. However, fortune smiled at him and he managed to buy the A35 you see featured here in 2014. And yes, it was a little bit different. Painted silver-grey clouds being blown off the front fender are the first clue, the second being the nice alloy wheels, which are another non-period feature stating quite clearly that this A35 might be a little different.

The person selling the car was just flicking it on and knew very little of the car’s history, so what follows is as much as Joe has been able to find out. The car started life as a 1957 Austin A35 with a 988cc engine. In 2003, it was bought by a young lady doing a panel-beating apprenticeship in Invercargill as a project car that would show off her skills in her final year. The 45-year-old car was showing clear signs of age, with rust popping out all over the place. Wherever it was parked, it would leave a damp patch made up of various mechanical fluids. →



FULL CIRCLE WITH A DATSUN MOTOR

She decided to turn it into a restomod project and swapped out the Austin running gear for more modern and infinitely more reliable Datsun 120Y running gear. The engine in the 120Y was the 1.2-litre motor that had proved itself to be bulletproof in many international car rallies. The four-speed gearbox shared the same reputation, and it was a fitting swap for the Austin gearbox. The 20-year jump in automotive technology meant that the car would no longer gasp its way up to the legal speed limit. With the new engine in place, it now had almost 70bhp (52kW) on tap.

The quality of the car that Joe bought was such that he was sure the previous owner had finished her apprenticeship with a high score. Apart from the 14-inch mags and the flying clouds, the only other indications that the car had been altered were the Mazda 323 high-back seats with built-in headrests. In all other respects, the car looked, externally at least, like a factory original.

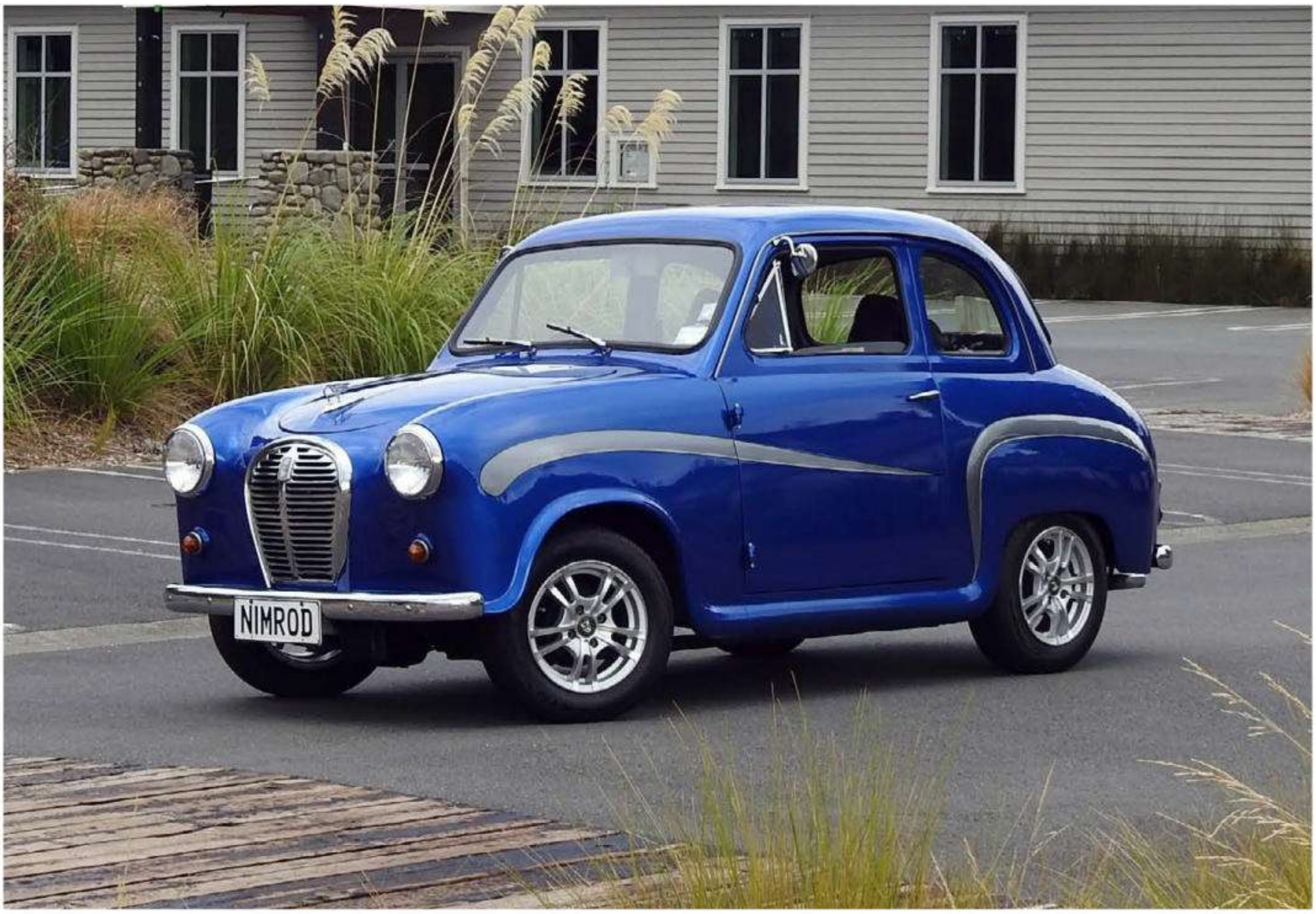
Under the bonnet, on the firewall is a crinkle caused by well-worn manufacturing dies. By 1957, with so many of these panels being pressed, the fit between the male and female dies was worn, and the gap between them allowed the crinkle to form. Joe believes that this was one of the reasons that the car ceased production, as that was cheaper than going to the expense of manufacturing new dies.

Joe drove the car as his daily driver until 2021. During that time, apart from general maintenance, he changed the wheels back to their original 13-inch spec and recalibrated the speedo to suit the smaller wheel diameter. The car certainly garnered a lot of attention, but it was getting to the stage when it would once again need some rust repairs and possibly some updates.

So, in 2021, the car was taken off the road for a full-body restoration, and Mike Todd of Windy City Motorcycles said that he was up for the job. Although motorcycles are Windy City Motorcycles' main bread and butter, out the back is room for any type of automotive work, including car restoration.

With the agreement that the car would be worked on as time permitted, the project took two years to complete. The wind-blown clouds had to go, and one of Mike's workers suggested placing silver-grey strops on the side. As you can see from the pictures, his suggestion was a good 'un. ➔

“She decided to turn it into a restomod project using infinitely more reliable Datsun 120Y running gear”



One of the best parts of building a restomod is that once you start down this route, there is no longer the pressure to keep everything factory original. Small changes can be made to improve the look of the car without fear of further offending the purists, who have already been offended by restomodding itself.

A car, just like any other man-made object, can become an artist's blank canvas, and Joe decided to make some more subtle changes that would improve the look but go unnoticed by anybody not intimately familiar with the Austin A35.

One change was moving the parking lights off the top of the fenders and mounting them below and to either side of the grille. Not so obvious is the fact that the grille is not painted in body colour, as per a normal A35, but is chromed, as per the Austin A40. Another less obvious change is the filled-in seams along the top of the fenders, giving the car a smoother, more rounded look.

DAILY DRIVER

Joe got the car back in 2023, and since then it has once again been his daily driver. Whenever he takes it out, he almost always gets a thumbs up from somebody. Others just smile and wave, and the odd person comes up to tell him a nostalgic story about an A35 or A30 they owned or drove as a company car. Joe now knows that at one time a lot of Hutt Valley district nurses drove around in Austin A35s, thanks to a conversation with a retired nurse at a petrol station.

Hopping behind the wheel, I find that this old lady does not like to be rushed. She is quite comfortable doing 100kph but prefers a gentler 90. She rocks and rolls a bit, as is appropriate for a car of this age. One thing that catches my attention is the pull-button start, which was not uncommon 70 years ago. These days, with modern cars, it is a push-button start. So, progress.

Joe had intended to get Windy City Motorcycles to give the car a full mechanical overhaul, but after being without it for two years, he decided that could wait for a while. The car is mechanically sound; starts first time, every time; and gets him to where he wants to go at the speed that he wants to drive at.

This car will never be sold, and Joe sees himself driving it until the day that he dies. ■

A FORCE
OF NATURE
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Words and photography by Jim Wilson

MY LIFE IN VOLKSWAGENS

Jim Wilson is a died-in-the-wool Volkswagen fan, a passion that he shares with his wife, Kelly. In his own words, Jim recalls some choice experiences from a large store of them, having owned around 30 of the characterful little Germans – Ed.

I passed my driver's license in April 1968, the day after the *Wahine* disaster. There were cracks in the roadway up on Murray Aynsley Hill in Christchurch, and that's where the traffic cop started screaming and yanked on the handbrake. He drove the rest of the way back to town and gave me a pass because he never wanted to see me again!

MY FIRST VW

My first car was a Vauxhall J and it never went at all. The second was a '39 Ford V8 sedan, which was a beautiful car. I sold it and then I bought it back. I put it off Dyers Pass Road [Cashmere Hills] because I was kissing my girlfriend at the same time as driving. It was worth it! But I remember running down the bank to the car – I had jumped out – and past my girlfriend to get to the vehicle. That's young love for you! She was some kind of lover lady, let me tell you, but it is best not to spoon and drive. No doubt the government will one day issue a fine, or worse, for spooning and driving.

Two years after this, I bought my first Volkswagen: a 1960 Beetle in a beautiful turquoise colour. It had arrived in a completely knocked down condition and was assembled somewhere up near Auckland.

It had a large back window, as opposed to the oval and the split back window models of the 1950s, and it had only the pop-out semaphores for indicators on the road. It had no bubble indicators on the front guards. This was the European model, and every single day I search for another one. It was 6V, and so the headlights were dull, and starting it was sometimes a dubious proposition.

The only other thing that I have to report from that era is that I almost bought a mid-'50s VW panel van from Five Star Motors on St Asaph Street, Christchurch, the local VW dealer. I continue to mourn my crooked reasoning about not buying this vehicle, because it has also stuck in my mind all these years. I never mourn the fact that I failed to buy a Standard Vanguard. They tended to rust before your eyes.

THE COLLECTION

But back to the story. So, do old Volkswagens rust before your very eyes? You have to watch them carefully and never drive them in the rain. I have owned Volkswagens where the rust has been 'fixed up' using cardboard, newspaper, silver paper, gaffer tape, and old tin cans ironed out flat and then affixed to the car using pop rivets. This is all part of the adventure.

The other common issue with Volkswagens, I should point out, is their propensity for catching fire in the engine compartment. There is a fuel line to the carburettor that often becomes corroded and leaks petrol onto the hot motor. Check it often and always travel with a fire extinguisher. There are also a number of good aftermarket fire-extinguishing products available as well. I have Blaze Cut systems in all my vehicles.

Currently, I own four vintage VWs

and I'm on the lookout for a nice VW notchback from the mid 1980s. I have owned two of them in the past, and they were fabulous cars. In my lifetime, I have owned probably 30 Volkswagens and I loved every single one of them, whether or not one could see the road through the floorboards.

SHOW WINNER

My current 1952 Bug won best in show and best in class at the 2024 VW Nationals held in Kaikoura. This one I found in California, and it was converted to right-hand-drive in by my masterful VW restorer, Dave Hermans, at Revive'm Auto Restorations, Inglewood, Taranaki.

It has matching numbers and was restored beautifully by a bloke who wanted the cash – lots of it – to shift to Thailand. This Beetle is a grand driver, even without synchro on the gears – this can be alarming unless one is paying careful attention. I love this car deeply. Life has let me down, but this vehicle never has.

TRANSPORT CONVERSION

I have a 1958 Volkswagen Transporter that is being converted to a Samba by Dave Hermans. It's been eight years now. I have had it back, but it is back in the North Island getting some minor issues ironed out. It has part power steering and this is a beautiful thing.

Before I decided to restore it, I hooned around in it for about 15 years. The registration plate was 'FURTHA'. The previous owner, no doubt deciding to get rid of the rust, gave it a quick flick in red and white. He also blew the gear-box on Takaka Hill. It too has never let me down.

1963, 21-window VW Samba

VW SAMBA 21-WINDOW

Then I have a 1963, 21-window VW Samba that I bought in Australia. It was a prize-winning car and has a 2.3-litre motor. It was restored by Steve Hopkins, who, apparently, is famous for this sort of thing. It has a Super Race crank with Chev journals, Mahle forged pistons, and an Eagle Race cam. Ignition duties are carried out by a MagnaSpark system. It also has a Kennedy race clutch and a Freeway Flyer transmission. It has a lot of other upgrades as well, like disc brakes, and so on and so forth.

It had been owned by Michael Ryan, who was Hugh Jackman's personal trainer. Apparently, the Wolverine himself was often seen driving around Bondi Beach in it. It has also featured in various Volkswagen magazines. It goes like a cut cat, and you could easily cruise around all day at 130kph in it. It is a thing of beauty; a work of art.

1956 Beetle

1956 BEETLE

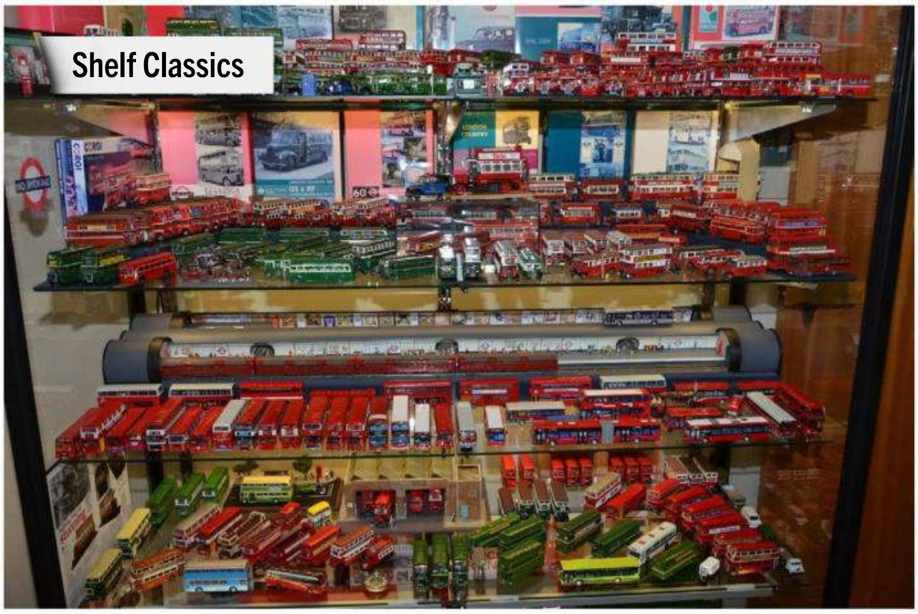
My 1956 Beetle I have owned for about six or seven years. A woman in Australia owned it and restored it before that. It is numbers matching and is in very nice condition. It remains a six-volter. The only problem I have had was that the exhaust pipes had not been heat-protected, so the paint bubbled a bit around them, which led to rust. I have had that rust cut out now. A local mechanic had it on a hoist while servicing it. He proclaimed that the underside was perfect. You could turn this car upside down and eat your dinner off it. I have had a mighty good life with lots of spooning in it.

Stop press! My wife Kelly and Rob, my business manager, recently travelled to Brisbane and checked out a 1967 Type 3 Volkswagen notchback for me.

It was subsequently purchased and paid for. It'll be on the water soon and then will face the hell of compliance. The colour is Savannah Beige. It is an immaculate vehicle, so there shouldn't be any problem. ■

Kelly and VW Kombi Deluxe

VW NATIONALS 2024
29th March - 1st April 2024
Kaikoura Racecourse
58DLUX



Some of Graham's books on classic buses line the back of his bus cabinet

Graham White (photo: Linda White)

DIE-CASTS MEET SCRATCH BUILTS

By Christopher Moor, photography by Ross de Rouffignac

When Patrick Harlow, *New Zealand Classic Car*'s Kits and Pieces man, suggested this article, I had a surprise in store, discovering the modeller had helped me with rebuilding my own model collection

I knew Graham White only as 'Graham' before doing this article on his model collection. Graham owned the hobby shop in Lower Hutt where I bought several die-casts in the late 1990s, when I started collecting models again.

Graham stopped collecting and building models a few years ago, after spending about 30 years bringing the items together for displays in cabinets in two rooms of his home. One is a city scene and the other a public transport hub. Both represent his English heritage. He migrated to New Zealand from London about 50 years ago and "loves it".

I ask what the reaction is when visitors see his collection. "It doesn't get so much attention these days," he says, acknowledging that most will have seen the displays before. But his grandson Lachlan is always fascinated by what he sees.

AN EYE FOR DETAIL

Graham knows how to create eye-catching exhibits, smoothly merging varying scales into a balanced and linking picture. His city scene, with its nod to London, is probably the first display that a guest in his house sees. The town has a bus garage, police station, and two fire stations, with a background of low relief commercial buildings.

Graham brings two Volvo P1800s to the camera. His actual classic of choice to drive is a 1963 P1800, which Patrick Harlow has written about for a future issue.

His 1/18-scale die-cast version by Revell, with a white painted body and made in China, has the updated styling of a one-piece front bumper and a straight chrome strip along each side, replacing the walking stick look.

In 1/43 scale, he has the Rob Eddie by Brooklin white metal die-casting with the original two-part bumper and the hooked side chrome.

He takes three transformed P1800 coupés by Corgi Toys (No. 228) that benefit from his restoration skills from a smaller cabinet. He bought these popular 1960s toys at die-cast swap meets or toy fairs in need of TLC. The models retain the original jewelled headlights, with the addition of more hand detailing, and now sport non-Corgi paint finishes of grey, red, and white. Graham's Photoshop skills created their number plates that are not from Corgi accessory packs of the era.

Graham cut down another play-worn Corgi P1800 and turned it into a convertible, crafting the cockpit and windscreen from plastic. The result is a professional-looking model. He has several other Volvos from different die-cast manufacturers in the collection, including 1/43-scale P1800 estate cars, more coupés, and Volvo 121 saloons.

TRUCKS TOO

Graham's favourite die-cast model is a 1/43-scale Austin Low Loader Taxi in blue and black by Oxford Diecast (No. AT002). Atmospherics had turned the front windscreen milky looking, and he skilfully replaced the glazing, including the trimming around its frame; the operation is not detectable by the camera's lens.

Graham says, "they got it right with the proportions of Vanguards' Series III Hillman Minx". Ross de Rouffignac and I tell him that the green saloon brings back memories of the Todd Motors assembly line at Petone, where we'd caught the train from the station opposite the plant when we travelled to Wellington in the school holidays.

Graham is approving of the detailing on the AUTOart 1/43-scale Holden FJ, pointing out the trim around the windows and the badging. He appears surprised when told the FJ was the first Holden sold in New Zealand, from 1954.

The vibrant red AUTOart 1/18-scale 1962 Jaguar E-Type has opening doors, revealing a cockpit with door handles, window winders, handbrake, and dashboard, with the bonnet lifting up to show the glorious six-cylinder motor in miniature. Graham created in Photoshop the car's number plates, which are the same as New Zealand motor racing legend Sybil Lupp had on her E-Type; a tribute to her.

Ross's favourite model from the collection is a 1/18-scale Maserati 250F, which is Graham's favourite racing car. The driver beside the car was bought separately.

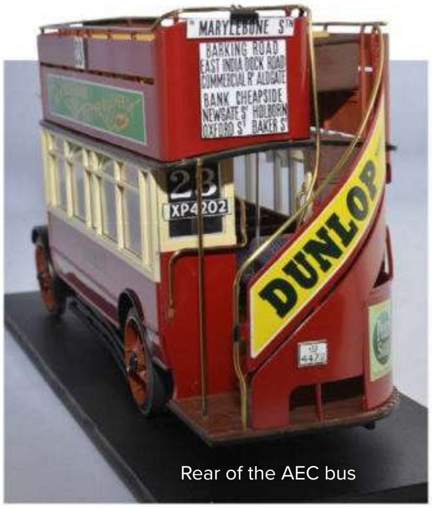
ON THE BUSES

Buses are Graham's main collecting interest. In the cabinets, there would be a combined total of 250 models. Some he has built from scratch in 1/18 and 1/24 scales, and there're die-casts from 'N' (1/148) scale upwards.

His love of buses came from boyhood travel across London from Lewisham to see family, in the days before his parents owned a car. For the destination blinds and route numbers on his die-casts, he purchased the decals from a specialist maker in the UK.

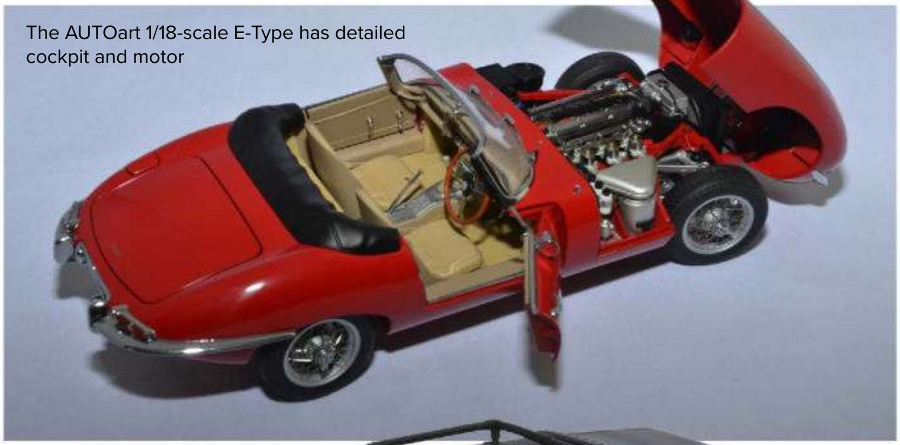
On his journeys across the city, he may have seen high-end British luxury saloons from the bus windows, like the Oxford Diecast representations of a Bentley MkVI in black and dark green (BN6003) and a Jaguar MkVIII in black and dark grey (JAG8001).

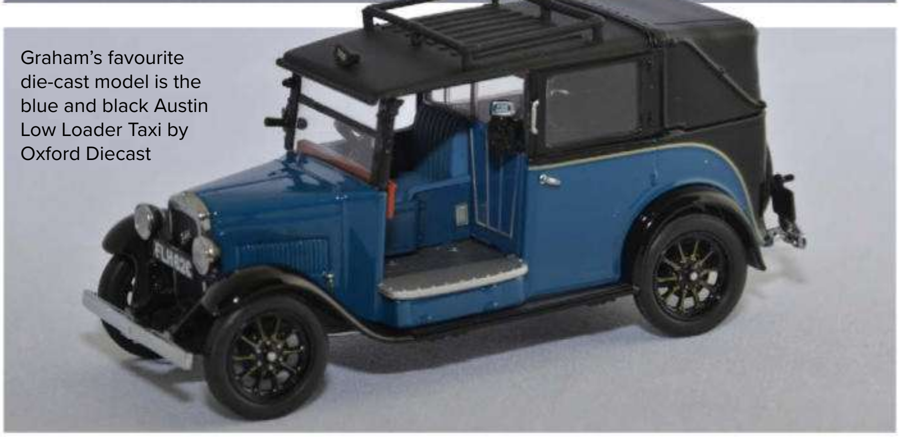
His built-from-scratch buses have earned him articles in the English magazine *Model Collector*. The bus chosen for this article is a 1928 NS by EC in 1/18 scale going to Marylebone Station on Route 23. AEC made the actual buses from 1922 to '29.



Rear of the AEC bus

Maserati 250F 1/18-scale racer with driver


The AUTOart 1/18-scale E-Type has detailed cockpit and motor


Graham's favourite die-cast model is the blue and black Austin Low Loader Taxi by Oxford Diecast

Plans for the bus came from a producer in Kent who drafts scale plans of classic buses for modellers. The model AEC bus took him about 18 months to build in his leisure hours. He describes model building as a "lonely hobby" requiring uninterrupted concentration and lots of patience.

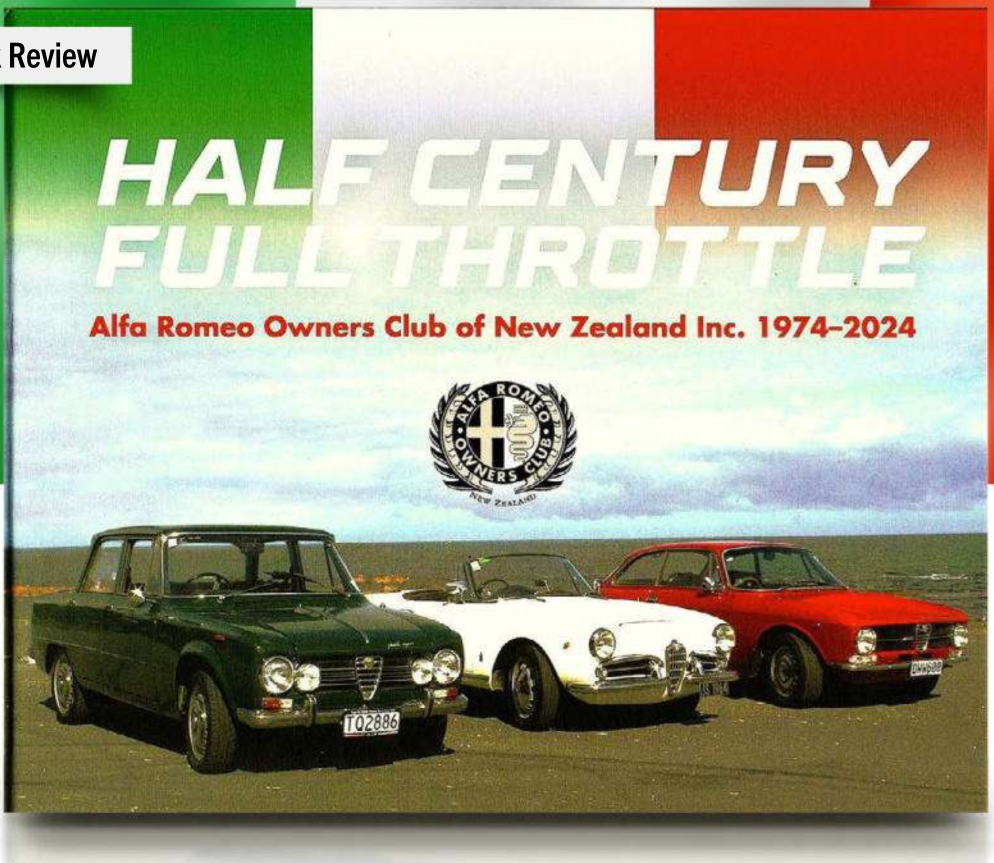
Graham has seen one of these AEC buses in the metal at the London Transport Museum. "You wouldn't like to ride in one on a wet day," he says, telling me how wet I'd get sitting on the upper deck in the rain.

The aluminium sheets, brass, plastic strips, and other materials that he used came from his shop, and Graham's Photoshop skills produced the sign on the passenger side of the bus for New Zealand Butter and Cheese.

Graham drafted his own plans for the 1/24-scale 1950s AEC Regent III Merryweather fire engine, scaling them up by working from a 1/76 model by Oxford Diecast (No. 76REG001). The actual appliance has a pump and a 50-foot (15m) ladder.

He says that he enjoys working in 1/24 scale more than in 1/18, as he has more flexibility modelling in this scale. Electrical wire provided the hoses for this fire engine, and for the headlights he moulded Kleer Kast glue before it dried.

From London to Lower Hutt, Graham brought a Biggin Hill loco he built from a 1950s Airfix 1/76-scale plastic kitset in his youth. The talent he displays with his later scratch model construction is already showing in this locomotive. ■



Half Century, Full Throttle
By Alfa Romeo Owners Club of New Zealand
PUBLISHED 2024.
ISBN: 978-0-473-71143-6
NZ$100
PLUS SHIPPING

HALF CENTURY, FULL THROTTLE

REVIEW BY MARK HOLMAN

What has 520 pages, hundreds of photos, and production quality to match the best books from anywhere? The Alfa Romeo Owners' Club of New Zealand's (AROC) 50th anniversary publication, entitled *Half Century, Full Throttle*.

Club members' text and photos, brought together by a management team headed by past-president Tom Bruynel and benefitting from various professional services, make this a book of which AROC can be very proud.

AROC New Zealand's 600 members, most of who seem to own more than one Alfa, are spread throughout the country. They are supported by regional representatives who arrange events and generally keep the Alfa spirit and enthusiasm alive. *Half Century, Full Throttle* provides an enthusiastic description of club activities throughout New Zealand since the club's formation in 1974. These range from concours competitions to the annual Festa – which is organised by a different branch each year – and rallies, racing, and club runs. Key personalities over the years get their due, as do importers and dealerships, and the providers of essential specialist services that keep so many Alfas on the road.

Over the years, there have been many different Alfa Romeo models and ranges. This surely helps to keep AROC current because the club caters for owners of the latest variants as well as those with a classic enthusiasm. Some Alfas may be more highly regarded than others – the 1930s 6C, Montreal, 105, and Alfasud for example – but it's clear that all models are welcomed.

Over the years, New Zealand has been home to some iconic Alfa Romeos – it's an overworked term, perhaps, but accurate in these cases. For instance, the book covers two P3s including Nuvolari's 1935 German GP–winning example, the 8C 2300 that won Le Mans in 1931, and the fabulous Bimotore in its single-engined Alfa-Aitken form.

Sadly, they haven't always remained onshore but plenty of amazing cars still grace AROC events. Models such as the Alfasud (your reviewer is a past owner of one of these excellent cars) receive a detailed background; some individual examples – the elegant 6C in the Southward Museum being one – have complicated histories that the club is still trying to unravel.

Whatever period or activity is of interest to you, the book is bound to have it covered. With its interesting text and very impressive photo selection, the high standard of production makes it a book to treasure; it would look great in any Alfisti's library: highly recommended!

To order, please go to **arocnz.org.nz** and follow the link for *Half Century, Full Throttle*.

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1938 Bugatti Type 57C Aravis Special

CLASSICS ON SHOW IN NOOSA

Combining classic and special cars with holiday time is not a bad proposition as Donn Anderson found during a recent foray into sunny Queensland. Donn also analyses the recent Webb's auction in Auckland, revealing a few surprises

Words and photography by Donn Anderson

Classic cars are alive and well and in daily use on the Sunshine Coast roads in Queensland. The love and respect for older vehicles across the Tasman has never been higher, with gathering interest and enthusiasm for classic car events. The Noosa Concours d'Elegance on 19 July 2025 will be the third-annual running of a prestigious car event that shuts down the classy Hastings Street adjacent to arguably one of the best beaches in Australia. This one-day, free-to-spectators-and-admirers show is based on the famous Pebble Beach Concours and is an ideal setting for some superb machinery.

The 2024 event attracted around 80 cars, including a rare Ferrari 250 LM, Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Gullwing and Porsche 356 Speedster.

Steve Padgett, one of the driving forces behind the Noosa event, has a car collection that includes a restored 1911 Benz imported into Australia before World War I; Jack Brabham's BT24 Formula 1 open-wheeler; and a 1957 Rolls-Royce owned by American crime writer Clive Cussler, who passed away in 2020 (the Cussler Museum in the US has 100 superb classics dating from 1906 until 1965 and is open to the public in the northern summer months).

NOOSA CONCOURS 2024

The Best in Show award at the 2024 Noosa concours was a 1938 Bugatti

Type 57C Aravis Special, which had won its class at the 2005 Pebble Beach Concours. Clive Palmer, who now owns the eight-cylinder supercharged Bugatti, has just gained approval to build Australia's largest car museum west of Brisbane. A 2016 Aston Martin GT12 Vantage won Best Modern Car, and the People's Choice was a 1994 McLaren F1 road car. An award was also given to a 1932 Chevrolet BA Confederate Moonlight Speedster. The Lamborghini Miura SV on show was believed to be the only one of its kind in the country. Every car on display had a voice recording describing the vehicle with a unique QR code.

FORD MUSTANGS ARE CELEBRATED

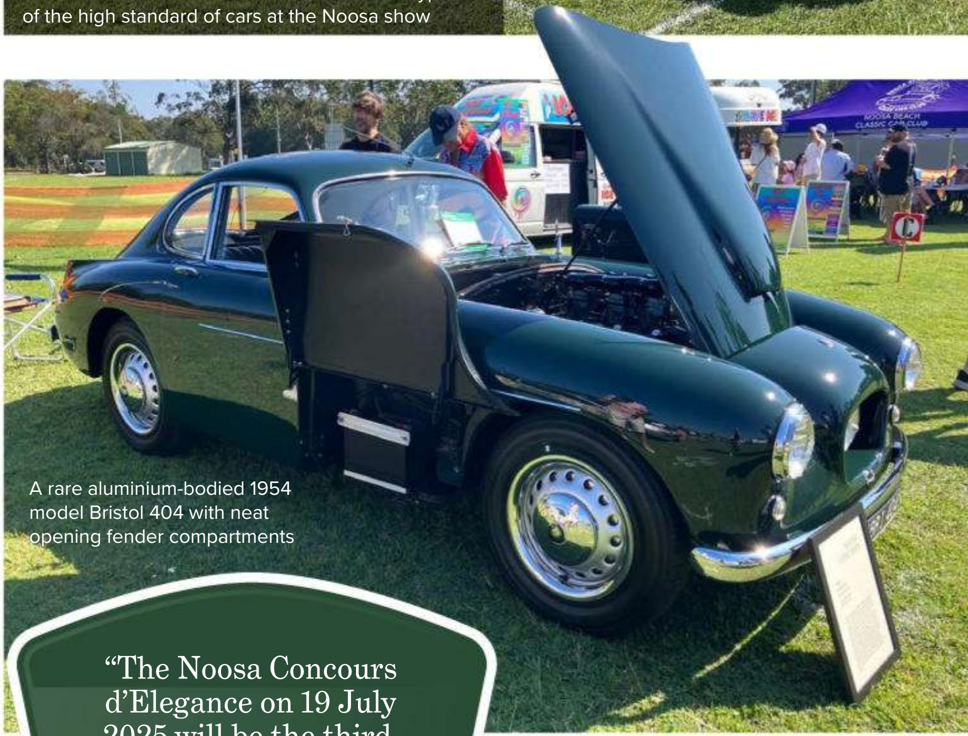
A few weeks later, in September, I flew into Queensland for the running of the 36th Noosa Beach Classic Car Show at nearby Tewantin. The well-run and generously laid out display that attracted scores of classic vehicles is regarded as East Coast Australia's most prestigious all-make car show. This year, the event featured German marques and celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Mustang.

Showrunner Noosa Beach Classic Car Club was formed in 1988, and its first street party to promote the Hastings Street shopping area attracted 17 cars, including a 1905 Renault, a 1926 Bentley, and a 1926 Salmson race car. Roll on more than three decades, and more than 200 cars participated in the 2024 event. Peter Bartolo's 1965 Shelby Daytona Coupe was judged Best Competition car, and the top Mustang was a 1966 Colt convertible, one of several Mustangs on display. A superb 1932 North American Ford Highboy was the much-deserved Best Muscle/Street Machine, although the experts tell me the Highboy, or Hiboy, is actually a hot rod. This iconic car, with its three-piece bonnet, hidden door hinges, and lack of wheel guards, is regarded as the very first hot rod. The model has been immortalised on a US Forever postal stamp. The Classic Pre '50s class was won by a 1947 Ford Super Deluxe, while a 1977 Toyota Soarer GT clinched the category for Asian models.

Tony Herald's 1964 Jaguar E-Type won the British Sports car category and the best relatively recent European sedan was a 2004 Mercedes-Benz CLK. Nick Milligan's 1975 Volkswagen Beetle was the winning Survivor / Barn Find class winner, and a 1971 Bolwell Nagari was awarded the best Australian Sports car category.

It was difficult not to be impressed by the mint stainless-steel 1981 Delorean DMC-12, one of 80 in Australia. There are at least five in New Zealand from a total

This 1961 Cadillac Series 62 convertible was typical of the high standard of cars at the Noosa show



A rare aluminium-bodied 1954 model Bristol 404 with neat opening fender compartments

> "The Noosa Concours d'Elegance on 19 July 2025 will be the third-annual running of a prestigious car event"
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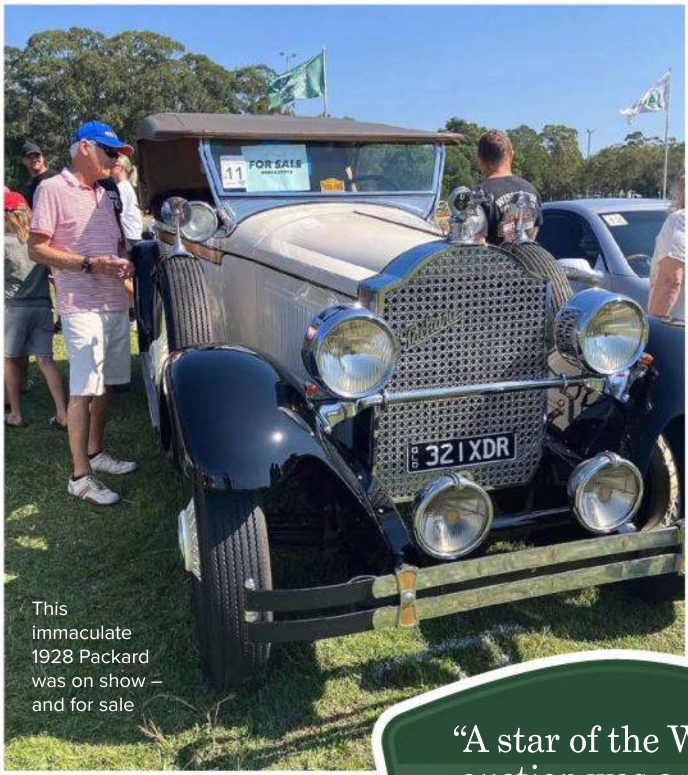
Donn Anderson checks out a 1965 Ford Thunderbird Special two-door coupé and 1932 Highboy hot rod at the 2024 Noosa Classic Car Show



This immaculate 1928 Packard was on show – and for sale

Plenty of rare cars in regular use on the Sunshine Coast, like this Citroën station wagon

Donn inspects an Aussie-built BMC Mini Moke in Noosa's famous Hastings Street location for the annual Noosa concours weekend

production of around 9000, all made in 1981 and 1982. Despite the Irish-built Delorean having a reputation for being slow and unreliable, there is still interest and fascination surrounding the gull-winged DMC-12 and a Delorean Club of New Zealand was founded in 2014.

Other notables resting on the Noosa grass included a 1928 Packard, built during the years when the make was the top-selling luxury brand in the US; a lengthy 1961 Cadillac Series 62 convertible; a 1965 Ford Thunderbird Landau hardtop; and a Cortina GT that finished second outright in the 1969 Southern Cross International Rally.

A rare and immaculate 1954 two-litre, six-cylinder Bristol 404 with aluminium panels over a steel and ash frame was of particular interest. Onlookers were intrigued by the lockers in the front wings that are accessed externally by gullwing doors. The locker on the nearside holds the spare wheel and jack, while the offside locker accommodates the battery and fuse panel. Apparently only 52 Bristol 404s were built.

> "A star of the Webb's auction was a silver 1977 Aston Martin AM V8 Series III, with a price … of $176,545"

SEVENTY-YEAR-OLD HOLDEN FJ OVERALL WINNER

The star of the show was Ken Nothdurft's pristine 1954 Holden FJ that took away the in Show trophy as well as the People's Choice where visitors voted for their favourite exhibit.

Apart from the well-known FJ body shape, there was little connection between this remarkable car and the original Holden, but most onlookers saw it as a great tribute to the original FX, or 48-215, applauded as the first car made in Australia.

Nothdurft began with two trailer loads of bits, evolving them into a metallic red–painted masterpiece powered by a Commodore Ecotec V6 feeding through a BorgWarner T5 gear-box. The Holden now has four-wheel disc brakes, 17-inch Hussla GT alloy wheels, and Commodore rack-and-pinion steering. The light-colour interior comprises HK Monaro fabric and ivory star pattern headlining and the finishing touches are LED lighting and a pair of white gloves placed delicately in the immaculate fully trimmed boot.

Just a week after the Noosa event, the Muscle on the Mountain event at Maleny, a rural town inland from coastal Caloundra, attracted 600 classic, custom, vintage, and modern and memorable cars and around 2000 fans to admire the machinery. Typical of the local enthusiasm was Maleny resident Doug Benjafield, who became so tired of the poor rear vision in his 1928 Model A Ford roadster that he has fitted a solar-powered wireless camera system, which he reckons is a convenient and cost-effective solution for vintage cars.

Back in Noosa, keen locals were using MGB roadsters, elderly Volkswagen Beetles, and cruising in Mini Mokes as everyday drivers. Australia built 26,000 Mokes between 1966 and 1981 – more than the total UK Moke production of 14,518.

Sitting outside the reception area of the Sofitel hotel in Noosa, I found two immaculate red Sunbeam Tiger V8s waiting to spring into action.

If you are thinking about a holiday break in the magical Noosa area, the 2025 Classic Car Show is again scheduled for Father's Day on 7 September, less than two months after the Hastings Street concours – both events not to be missed for car addicts. More than 200 rare or special cars are also expected at the second Canberra Festival of Speed, to be held at the capital's Thoroughbred Park on 25 and 26 January. This event is modelled on the Goodwood Festival and includes V8 Supercars, and Formula 1 and Formula 5000 open-wheelers.

The general feeling across the Tasman is that prices for collector and classic cars have eased back after being buoyed during the Covid-19 pandemic. But they are still regarded a better financial bet than stocks and real estate. The number-one Australian collector car is still the Ford Falcon XY GTHO Phase III, which retailed for just under $6K when brand new. A good 1971 example had risen to $35K by 1988, before topping $600K in the early 2000s. There has been little change in Falcon GTHO market values in the past two decades.

The Holden Monaro HK is another strong performer, while a Torana A9X that commanded $30K in 1988 can now be worth around $400K. Similarly, the Chrysler E49 Valiant Charger that was valued at a mere $9K 36 years ago is likely to cost $250K in 2024. The four reasons for classic car ownership are deemed to be scarcity, tangible appeal, pure joy of ownership, and appreciation potential. Laudably, most enthusiasts regard appreciation potential as the least important factor.

ROYAL ROLLS STARS AT WEBB'S

A few weeks before my Australian adventure and back in Auckland, the Webb's Collectors' Cars auction commanded its biggest audience and achieved solid sales, although there were many more lookers than buyers. The 1963 Rolls-Royce Phantom V used by Queen Elizabeth II on her New Zealand tours in 1963 and 1970 got close to the pre-auction estimate with three or four bidders and a selling price of $172,500 including Webb's commission.

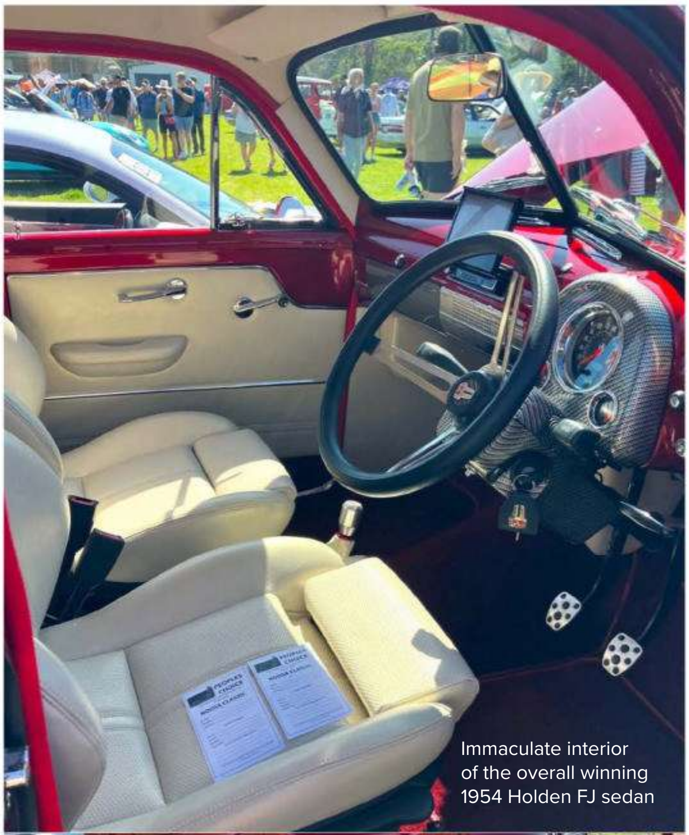
The Rolls had been maintained most of its running life by Wally Presard on behalf of the Department of Internal Affairs, and the vendor's family had owned and used the regal Rolls for 40 years. The HJ Mulliner Park Ward–bodied Rolls was showing 83,167 miles when it came under the auctioneer's hammer.

Contrasting the royal car, a 1984 Rolls-Royce Silver Spur was only expected to reach between $20K and $30K and sold after the auction for $23K. A 1956 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud also changed ownership following the auction for $50K, which matched expectations. No bidders were found for the 1952 Bentley MkVI drophead coupé and a 2016 Bentley Bentayga W12 also failed to sell. Newest car on offer was a 2020 Bentley Flying Spur W12, which saw just one bidder and sold below expectations for $275K.

An extrovert 2006 Mercedes-Benz CLK DTM AMG cabriolet owned by internet entrepreneur Kim Dotcom also attracted media interest and was awarded the highest pre-auction estimate of between $650K and $850K. Two bidders pushed up to an offer of $575K, but the Mercedes failed to find a new owner.

A 2005 Aston Martin DB9 V12 showing 61,000km appeared great value for money with a selling price of $61,525, right on estimate. However, the quirky four-door 1983 Aston Martin Lagonda (estimated between $150K and $200K) did not sell following a top bid of $110K.

A star of the Webb's auction was a silver 1977 Aston Martin AM V8 Series III, with a price estimate of between $80K and $200K and an actual sale figure of $176,545. This limited-edition model was imported


Immaculate interior of the overall winning 1954 Holden FJ sedan

Pristine Holden FJ boot – with a pair of gloves in case your hands are dirty. This was the winning car at the Noosa show

The lone 1981 Delorean DMC-12 attracted plenty of interest at Noosa

Sixty years of Mustangs celebrated at the Noosa show

into New Zealand in 2021 and had a speedometer reading of 72,000 miles when auctioned after a history that included time in a Hungarian museum and with a Belgian collector.

Hopes for achieving at least $75K for an excellent 1955 Triumph TR2 were not realised, and the car did not sell following a top bid of $55K.

STRONG CLASSIC MINI PRICE

Classic Mini values continue to reach for the sky, and a 2000 Cooper Sport with an exceptionally low 6956km at the Webb's auction was no exception. With just one service at 2498km under its belt, this New Zealand–new 24-year-old Mini sold for $76,475 – actually above expectations and good money indeed.

Also finding solid coin are early Land Rovers and the restored 1950 Series 1 80 at the auction sold for $57,500 following a pricing indication of $70K–$85K. However, the 1970 Volvo P1800E fell well short of its pricing estimate of between $70K and $90K with a top bid of $57,500; not enough to secure a sale.

The 1991 BMW 850i two-door coupé sold for $28,750, below expectations, while a 2012 Mazda RX-8 Spirit R and a 2016 BMW B3 Biturbo failed to find new owners.

There were expectations that the rare 1991 Buick Reatta V6 convertible could make between $20K and $25K, and the final $6325 selling price appeared remarkably good value. The 1966 two-door Dodge Charger coupé sold for $57,500. A 2007 Jaguar XK 4.2 convertible sold just under estimate for $28,750, while a 1986 Jaguar XJ-SC with a TWR body kit remained unsold.

Of the 23 car lots, 14 were sold, or 61 per cent of the vehicles on offer. Chris Wiseman, specialist at Webb's, said that this was usually about what was achieved – a good result in what are said to be challenging times economically. "We are selling with 'less ease' these days, but collectors are resilient and Webb's are happy with the result," he said.

A NZ$11 BILLION INDUSTRY AND GROWING

Values of historic and classic cars remain resilient, and while there are always bumps along the way with varying economic conditions, the general rule is that these vehicles appreciate in time, unlike most near-new cars, which depreciate. In 2023, the research by Glasshouse Consulting at the request of the New Zealand Federation of Motoring Clubs revealed that our fleet of historic and classic motor vehicles was worth about $11 billion.

There were 15,500 respondents to the survey and the surprisingly high total figure was made up of 279,200 historics and classics, with an average value of $43K. The $11 billion figure included vehicle insurance, garaging, restoration and servicing, with 5700 employees supporting the trade and services for the cars. Annual costs were listed at just under $10K. Not only did 70 per cent of New Zealanders reckon that historic vehicles were part of our heritage but also 26 per cent wanted to own one.

Positive reaction to the historic and classic car movement indeed! ■

> "Positive reaction to the historic and classic car movement indeed"
>
> ★ ★ ★ ★

Two V8-engined Sunbeam Tigers ready for action outside the Sofitel hotel in central Noosa

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Jacob Johnstone (left) and his David Brown tractor and Riley Taylor and his V8 Land Rover, and Christmas in Te Anau

By Quinton Taylor, photographs supplied

IF YOU DON'T ASK

A couple of young lads from Te Anau grabbed their apprenticeships at well-known restoration company Geraldine Auto Restorations with both hands. They are now learning and working with machinery they enjoy

It started with a letter from Peter and Leanne Johnstone, of Te Anau, in July 2024. Peter was obviously proud of the way his son, Jacob, and a mate, Riley Taylor, had turned a work experience opportunity at Geraldine Auto Restorations into apprenticeships for both.

I was intrigued by Peter's letter and made contact with Jacob, a Southland lad who is enjoying a job that is exactly what he wants to do, as he explains: "I'm now 18 and I started my panel beating apprenticeship back in 2023, so I'm about 18 months into it and hoping to finish it next year. They reckon on three years to do it, but it all depends how quickly you have your paperwork done."

Testament to being on target – and to his and Riley's skills – is a J1 Bedford pickup, now gleaming and back with its owner.

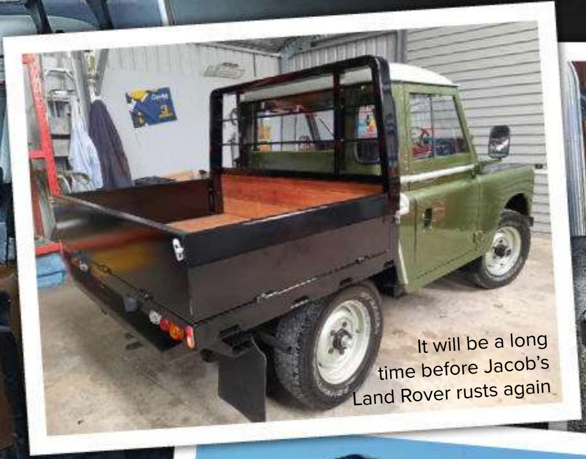
"It does look good. I built the new step-side for it along with fuel tanks and rear guards, and that sort of stuff. I'm currently working on a wee Mini Clubman estate which has been a bare-metal respray and has now been painted."

Riley carried out a fair share of mechanical work on the same J1 Bedford.

"I worked on that at the same time as Jacob," Riley says. "It's great working here, and when I hopefully finish my mechanical engineering apprenticeship next year, I'll be staying at Geraldine, as I enjoy the work here."

At 14, Jacob received this Land Rover and this was it two years later

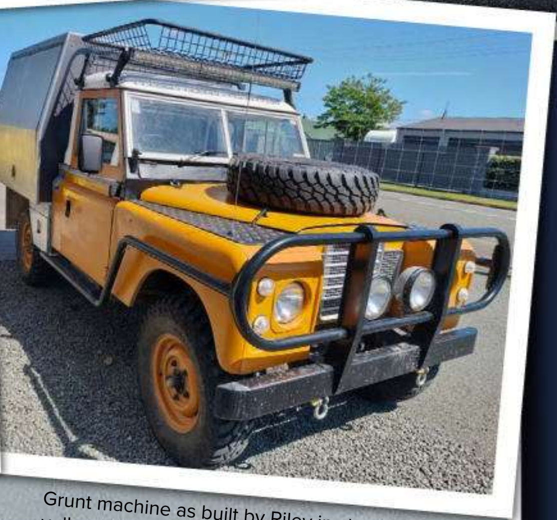
Jacob and his David Brown tractor before he restored it



It will be a long time before Jacob's Land Rover rusts again

The finished J1 Bedford looks impressive

Under the bonnet of Riley's Land Rover: 3.9 litres of V8 and all his own work



Grunt machine as built by Riley in standout yellow and powered by a 3.9-litre V8

Riley has worked on a 1923 vintage Dodge and a Ford Mustang this year. He enjoyed the diverse requirements of each, but there is another that stands out.

"An interesting job we have on at the moment is a 1957 Series 1 Land Rover," he says.

LAND ROVER ENTHUSIASTS

Both lads are confirmed Land Rover enthusiasts, but they are not the easiest of vehicles for relative youngsters to take on as classic restoration projects. Jacob's 1980 short-wheelbase Land Rover Series 3 was given to him minus its gear-box when he was 14. Its panels required quite a bit of work, and he put his own mark on the distinctive vehicle.

"It took me about two years," he says. The rear deck he designed and made himself. "It's made out of 4mm steel, so it's pretty solid and heavy. Makes it ride a bit better," he laughs. "It still has the two-and-quarter-litre petrol [engine] powering it."

In Riley's case, his enthusiasm for the marque is considerable, and he laughs when I ask him how many Land Rovers he has. "A few!" is the reply. His latest creation is now quite different from when it left the Rover factory in 1977.

"It's all been rebuilt. I've added a new covered boxback on it, which you can sleep in and it's bright yellow! Oh, and I've repowered it with a 3.9-litre Rover V8, so it goes well."

WORK EXPERIENCE AND A CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Jacob recalls how he and Riley obtained their apprenticeships at Geraldine Auto Restorations: "The previous year [2022], I came up here and did a bit of work experience and it went from there. I came back and emailed them asking about the potentiality of getting an apprenticeship. It morphed into getting one and I moved up here."

Since joining the company, Jacob has been doing work that really appeals to him.

"It's quite cool learning how to work on old stuff, like building full panels and making stuff out of steel rather than replacing plastic bumpers and just fitting new parts; and learning the old skills like wheel work and shaping it up. I like working on the old stuff, especially English stuff. I've got my tractor I'm working on at the moment, a David Brown. I'm getting it ready for the end of the year to drive it down home for Christmas. I'll be leaving on the 21 December. That's the plan for that."

Riley has pitched in to help Jacob finish his now-pristine tractor.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Hello Quinton,

Firstly, I want to say how much I enjoy reading your magazine. It's amazing to see how many people devote time and money to keep these classics alive. I very much enjoyed reading the article on Samuel Shortall (Issue No. 394). It's great to see young people enjoying old classics.

It got me thinking that you may be interested in hearing my son Jacob's story.

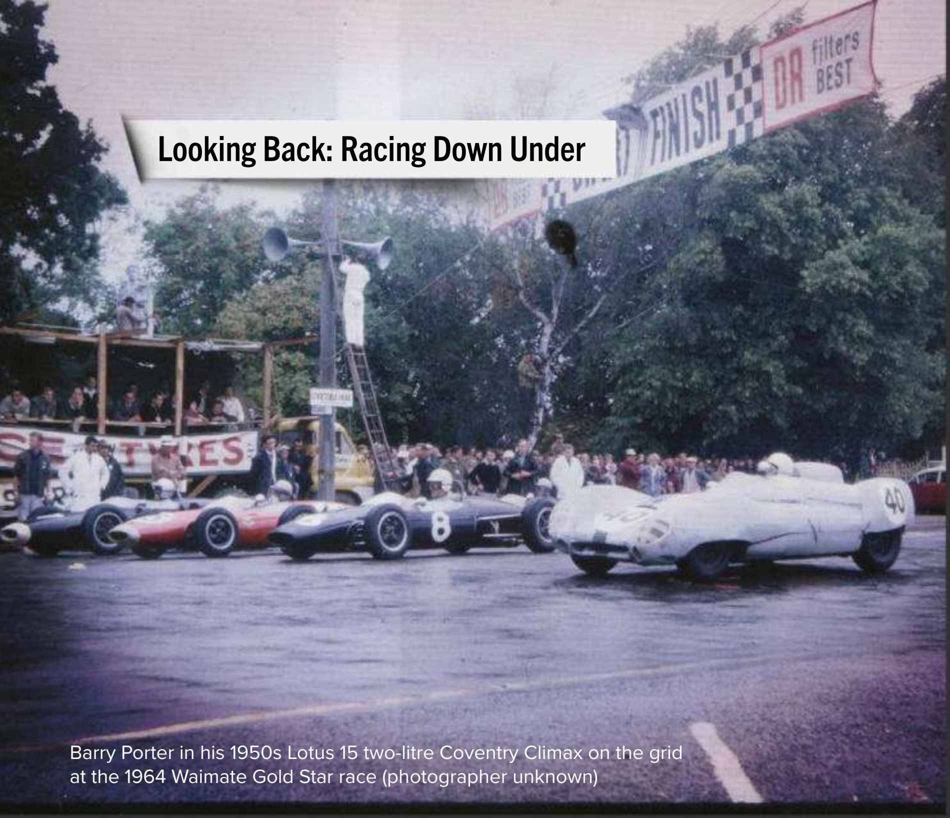
Growing up in Te Anau, he has developed a love for all things British. At age 14 (2019), he decided he needed to start preparing a vehicle for when he could get his driver's licence. He acquired a clapped out 1980 SWB [short wheelbase] Series 3 flatdeck Land Rover from his uncle. It was missing a gear-box but over the next three years he completed a body-off restoration: chassis and firewall, rust repair, repaint, re-upholstery; he built a new deck, put it through for a body certification compliance, got a new VIN, registration – all funded by himself with an afterschool job at the local supermarket, and mowing lawns.

At the completion of the project, he enjoyed the process so much he successfully approached Geraldine Auto Restorations for an apprenticeship which he is now 18 months into.

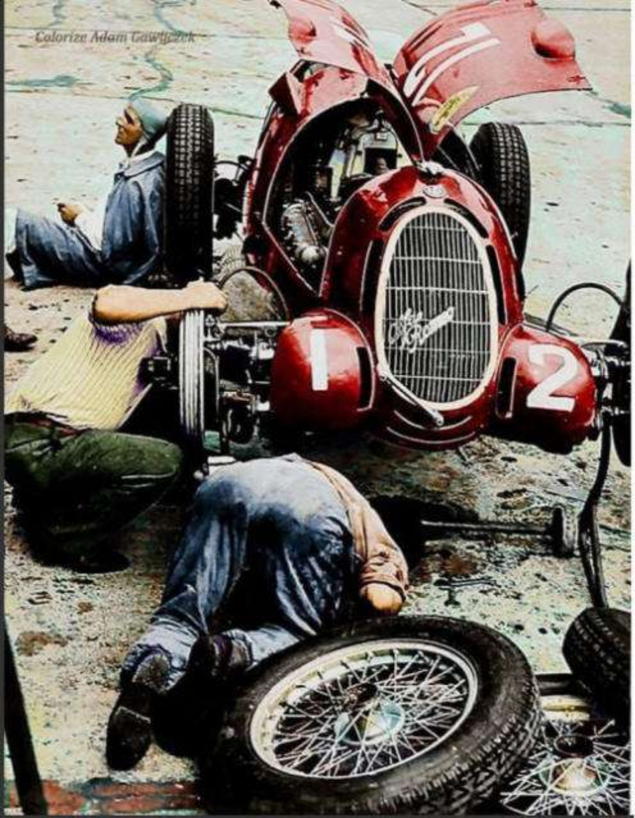
As if doing it for a job isn't enough, he's now into a 1964 David Brown tractor resto for himself and daily driving a 1975 XJ6 Series 2 Jaguar.

Hope you find this of some interest.

Regards, **Peter Johnstone** ■



Barry Porter in his 1950s Lotus 15 two-litre Coventry Climax on the grid at the 1964 Waimate Gold Star race (photographer unknown)



A KIWI BACKWATER 1950S STORY

PART 2

Aotearoa / New Zealand in the 1950s was a basic sort of place. In Part 2, Gerard continues looking back at some outstanding characters with the so-called Kiwi No. 8 wire mentality, who gave some exotic machinery a second wind at the forefront of our own motor racing scene

By Gerard Richards, photography from various sources

Le Mans start to Ardmore Sports Car Trophy race at the 1960 Ardmore GP meeting (photographer unknown)

FERRARI MASTERPIECES AND HOMEGROWN HEROES

Local heroes in the latter half of the ’50s came no bigger than tall laconic Cantabrian Pat Hoare, a Ferrari man through and through – except, it must be said, for a brief dalliance with a Maserati 4CLT-48 in 1955–’56, which brought little success.

There are all sorts of stories suggesting that Hoare had a preferential arrangement with Enzo Ferrari, from assisting him in wartime days, when it is reputed that he protected *il Commendatore* and his factory. Whatever the truth, it is indisputable that Pat Hoare acquired two Ferrari Formula Libre racing cars at a time when it seemed impossible for anyone else to acquire one, and very reasonably priced too.

The first one was a bit of a hybrid, being built at the factory for Hoare in 1957. Based on a 1954 Formula 1 (F1) 625, it had apparently been built as a Formula 2 car in 1952–’53. Previous drivers had been José Froilán González – real-life Marquess Alfonso de Portago, who died with his navigator and nine spectators in a terrible crash in the 1957 Mille Miglia – and Mike Hawthorn. It was fitted with upgraded front suspension, an enlarged 2.8-litre Le Mans engine, and Lancia D50 rear fuel tank.

It proved difficult to sort and reliability issues also plagued it. In his third season with it, following a factory rebuild, Hoare had a better run finishing second in the national Gold Star series and winning the New Zealand Hill-Climb Championship.

If Hoare’s first Ferrari was a revelation for local crowds, whetting their appetite for more, his second orgasmically beautiful Ferrari would blow them away. The Ferrari 256 came from a magnificent pedigree. In 1960, running its 2.5-litre V6 Dino engine, it had recorded the last F1 World Championship victory for a front-engine car at the Italian Grand Prix (GP). It mattered not that all the English teams had withdrawn over the use of the Monza banking; Phil Hill took a glorious victory in front of the partisan crowd.

After his previous problems with the 2.8-litre four-cylinder engine, Hoare requested the fitting of the three-litre V12 Testa Rossa sports car engine. This truly sublime machine was probably the most evocative race car to grace these shores, period. In his second season, Pat Hoare achieved his dream of winning the 1962 New Zealand Gold Star Championship.

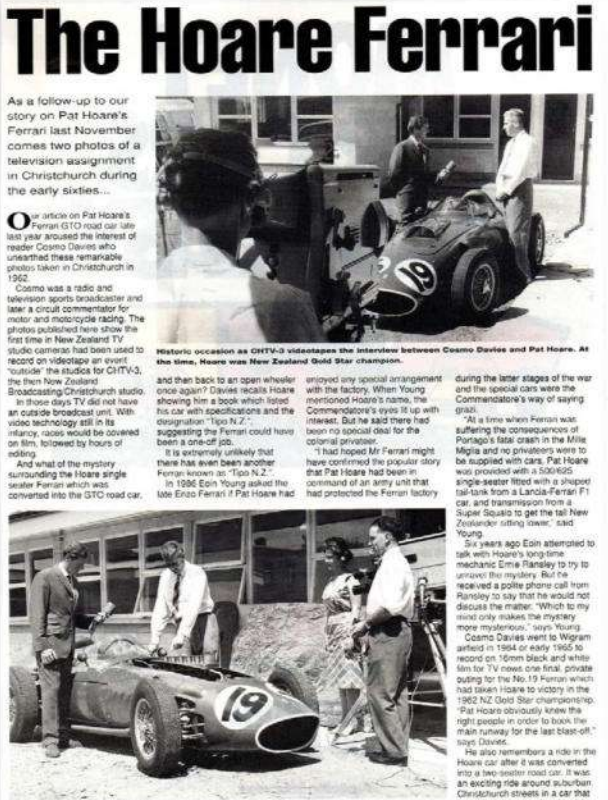
Against the growing horde of modern mid-engine racers, Hoare showed immense skill, particularly in winning the rain-soaked races at Waimate and Dunedin, along with Renwick in the dry. Can you imagine what it must have been like, gunning that gorgeous thoroughbred through the wet oil-slicked streets of Dunedin and Waimate and keeping it on the island to victory?

V12 MUSIC TO THE EARS

As Graham Vercoe heard and described it in his book *Historic Racing Cars of New Zealand*, “New Zealand tracks heard some great engine sounds, but nothing compared with the crescendo of the V12, especially crackling off the buildings at Waimate and Dunedin!” Who can argue with that?

It is a well-known gob-smacking fact that, following the conclusion of its racing activities, Pat Hoare was unable to sell this gorgeous creation. Absolutely no takers! He then undertook an adventurous conversion of it into a road-going Ferrari coupé/GT based on the 250 GT model. It was a high-end build, which included special parts from the Ferrari factory. Enzo highly commended the finished result. Hoare later sold the car to Hamiltonian school teacher Logan Fow, who owned it for 11 years, using it for fast road trips, plus club sprints and hill-climbs. Eventually, the car was bought by English classic racer Neil Corner with all the single-seater parts. It was returned to its original format for British historic racing.

The other great ex-F1 Ferrari was the 1950–’60, 375 V12 car that Ron Roycroft imported into New Zealand in 1956. It had a long and chequered history, and this was unfortunately to resume in Roycroft’s ownership. However,



The Hoare Ferrari

As a follow-up to our story on Pat Hoare's Ferrari last November comes two photos of a television assignment in Christchurch during the early sixties...

Our article on Pat Hoare's Ferrari GTO road car late last year aroused the interest of reader Cosmo Davies who unearthed these remarkable photos taken in Christchurch in 1962.

Cosmo was a radio and television sports broadcaster and later a circuit commentator for motor and motorcycle racing. The photos published here show the first time in New Zealand TV studio cameras had been used to record on videotape an event "outside" the studios for CHTV-3, the then New Zealand Broadcasting Christchurch studio.

In those days TV did not have an outside broadcast unit. With video technology still in its infancy, races would be covered on film, followed by hours of editing.

And what of the mystery surrounding the Hoare single seater Ferrari which was converted into the GTO road car, and then back to an open wheeler once again? Davies recalls Hoare showing him a book which listed his car with specifications and the designation "Tipo N.Z.", suggesting the Ferrari could have been a one-off job.

It is extremely unlikely that there has even been another Ferrari known as "Tipo N.Z.".

In 1986 Eoin Young asked the late Enzo Ferrari if Pat Hoare had enjoyed any special arrangement with the factory. When Young mentioned Hoare's name, the Commendatore's eyes lit up with interest. But he said there had been no special deal for the colonial privateer.

"I had hoped Mr Ferrari might have confirmed the popular story that Pat Hoare had been in command of an army unit that had protected the Ferrari factory during the latter stages of the war and the special cars were the Commendatore's way of saying grazi.

"At a time when Ferrari was suffering the consequences of Portago's fatal crash in the Mille Miglia and no privateers were to be supplied with cars, Pat Hoare was provided with a 500/625 single-seater fitted with a shaped tail-tank from a Lancia-Ferrari F1 car, and transmission from a Super Squalo to get the tall New Zealander sitting lower," said Young.

Six years ago Eoin attempted to talk with Hoare's long-time mechanic Ernie Ransley to try to unravel the mystery. But he received a polite phone call from Ransley to say that he would not discuss the matter. "Which to my mind only makes the mystery more mysterious," says Young.

Cosmo Davies went to Wigram airfield in 1964 or early 1965 to record on 16mm black and white film for TV news one final, private outing for the No.19 Ferrari which had taken Hoare to victory in the 1962 NZ Gold Star championship. "Pat Hoare obviously knew the right people in order to book the main runway for the last blast-off," says Davies.

He also remembers a ride in the Hoare car after it was converted into a two-seater road car. It was an exciting ride around suburban Christchurch streets in a car that had a less than comfortable ride due to the shortish wheelbase.

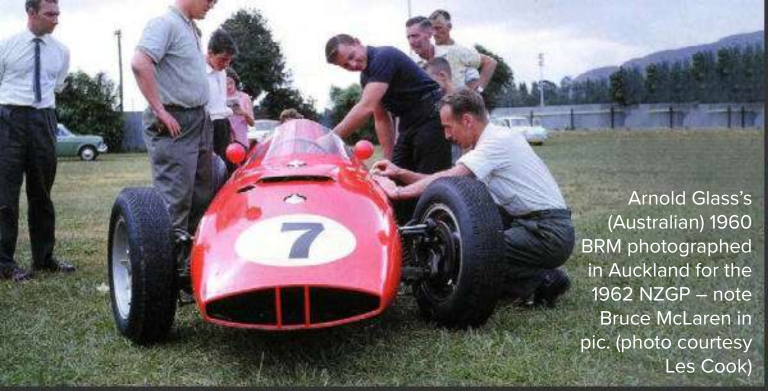
Historic occasion as CHTV-3 videotapes the interview between Cosmo Davies and Pat Hoare. At the time, Hoare was New Zealand Gold Star champion.

Cosmos Davies (left) interviews Pat Hoare about his magnificent Ferrari Testa Rossa Tipo N.Z. open wheeler in Christchurch in 1962.

Pat Hoare’s superb Ferrari 256 Testa Rossa V12 at the Dunedin Road Race, 1961 (photo: Ian MacDougall)

> “Hoare’s first Ferrari was a revelation for local crowds, whetting their appetite for more”

Pat Hoare’s Ferrari V12 on trailer, circa 1960–’62 (photographer unknown)

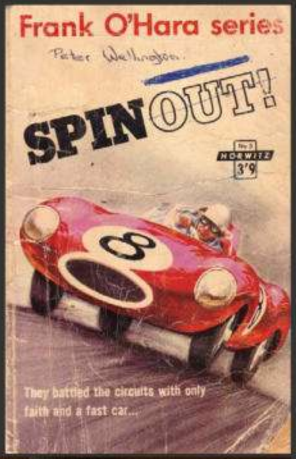

Arnold Glass's (Australian) 1960 BRM photographed in Auckland for the 1962 NZGP – note Bruce McLaren in pic. (photo courtesy Les Cook)

Jaguar D-Type leading a Lister Jaguar

Jim Boyd holding off Spencer Martin in the 250LM, Levin, 1966

> "The list of Maseratis raced here is long, and their histories are convoluted"

Lister Jaguar competing in the classic car races at the 1986 NZGP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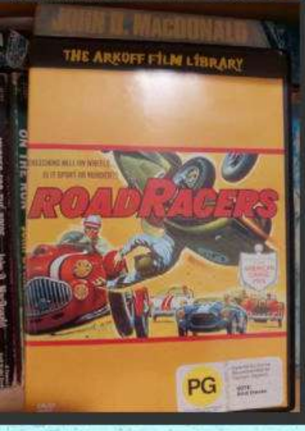

he had some great moments with it, like gloriously leading the 1957 New Zealand Grand Prix (NZGP) for the first 10 laps before succumbing to heat exhaustion. He was the first New Zealander to lead the GP.

The pinnacle of this Ferrari 375's – chassis No. 2 – achievements on the track was the dominating win by forceful Argentinian driver José Froilán González in the 1951 British GP. It had been a major breakthrough win, overturning the previous stranglehold of the supercharged Alfa's dominance in F1.

With the F1 capacity-limit reduction the following year, and the Ferrari's ineligibility, it began its slide down the food chain. Initially purchased by Louis Rosier, who was then confronted with few opportunities to race it, he eventually on-sold it to the Roycrofts. Unfortunately, it had been over-revved prior to departing France and arrived in New Zealand in a damaged state. This became an ongoing saga for Ron and his father, trying to patch up the tired V12. He did manage a second overall in the 1957 New Zealand Gold Star series, beaten by Ross Jensen driving Peter Whitehead's loaned ex-Castellotti Monza Ferrari sports car.

The car was eventually parted out, with the V12 engine going to Australian hydroplane racer Ernie Nunn, who set an Australasian water-speed record of 222kph. The chassis went to coach-builder Ferris de Joux in Auckland, who fitted a fibreglass body and a 3400cc Jaguar engine. Fortunately, the chassis was acquired by Cantabrian Gavin Bain in 1968, and, after painstaking efforts, he finally managed to recover the V12 engine from Nunn. Over a lengthy restoration, he matched it all together. This included the special single-seater body recreated in the shape of the Indianapolis 375 *monoposto* shell by Jack Morral in Orewa, Auckland, for the Roycrofts. It was in this format that it re-emerged at the large 1989 International Ardmore Reunion classic car race meeting.

SUPER SQUALO SWANSONG

These of course were not the only Ferrari single-seaters to grace these shores in the '50s, but space doesn't allow for an exhaustive explanation. It's important to note, though, that two Ferrari 555s, better known as 'Super Squalo' F1 cars, raced in New Zealand and stayed here. The two cars were brought out for the international races by

Monza Ferrari Corvette, Muriwai Beach, 1963 (photo: Stuart Buchanan)

Ken Wharton about to deafen the locals at Ardmore during the 1954 NZGP weekend – BRM P15 V16 (photo: *New Zealand Herald* – R Armstrong)

(Photo: Gerard Richards)

(Photo: Gerard Richards)

10
FERRARI TR60 #10 Le Mans 1960
W. Mairesse - R. Ginther

Peter Whitehead and Reg Parnell. They had not been successful in F1 during the 1954–'55 seasons. However, they did better here, Parnell winning the 1957 NZGP and the Dunedin street race. Whitehead won at Wigram and Ryal Bush.

The cars were then sold to New Zealand drivers, Tom Clark getting the Whitehead car and John McMillan the Parnell version. Tom Clark was a brawny, aggressive hard-charger, who enjoyed considerable success but also had some major accidents, including inverting his Maserati in a ditch at Ryal Bush in 1957. He later became Graham McRae's patron, owning and running his McLaren M10A and B under the name of his ceramics business, Crown Lynn Potteries. Later, he also owned the round-the-world yacht-racing winner *Ceramco New Zealand*.

The Ferrari Super Squalos were to have chequered local histories. The highlights were Tom Clark winning the Christchurch Festival Road Race at Mairehau and the Vic Hudson Memorial Trophy at Levin in 1958. The cars then went to Australia, where both drivers crashed, in Clark's case, almost fatally at Bathurst in 1958. Both cars were rebuilt in Australia, the McMillan car staying there while the Clark Ferrari came back to New Zealand. Clark continued to race it into '59 with some success, including winning the Easter Levin Championship. Bob Smith then acquired it and raced it until 1963 with limited success. It was past its use-by date and was now unloved and uncompetitive and languished for a time in the open on Garth Souness's used car yard.

MORRARI CREATION

The outcome of this story will ring a bell, being the creation of the Morrari All-comer Saloons racer. Eventually, the chassis and body panels were rescued by Gavin Bain (that man again). The engine had already been bought by Len Southward to save it being sold overseas.

The only other Ferrari of note that came to New Zealand with 1950s heritage was the ex–Ken Wharton 750 Monza sports car. Ken Wharton was of course killed in the car at Ardmore in 1957.

The car was wrecked but salvaged by Aucklander Ken Harris and painstakingly rebuilt by him and Bob Farrell. An accurate replacement body was built by Jack Morral. Harris had considerable success with the car between 1958 and 1961. John Riley

Beautifully restored Southward Car Museum–owned ex–Ken Wharton Monza Ferrari at Hampton Downs Ferrari Festival, January 2014 (photo: Gerard Richards)

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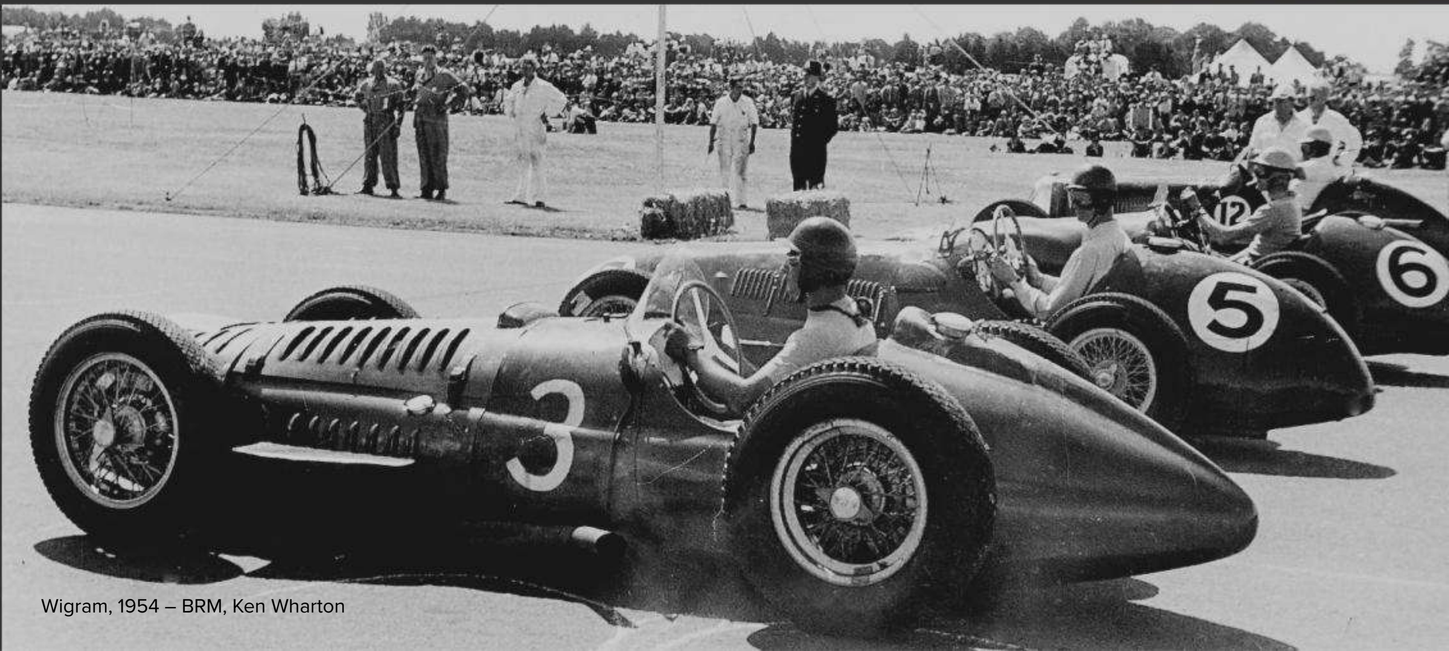
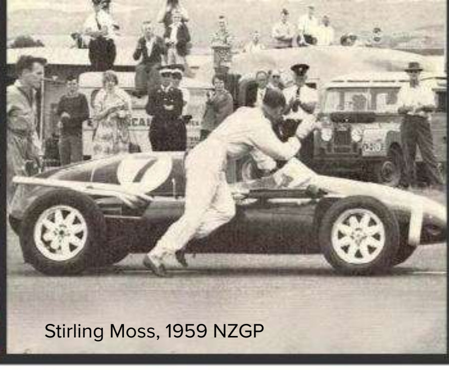


Wigram, 1954 – BRM, Ken Wharton

Stirling Moss at Goodwood


Stirling Moss, 1959 NZGP

Tojeiro Jaguar of Brent Hawes chasing down a Buckler at Waimate, 1965–'66 season (photographer unknown)

owned it next and fitted a small block Chev V8, but, by then, the days of the Monza being a front-runner were over. The car was acquired by the Southward Car Museum and has since been fully restored and fitted with the Tom Clark / Bob Smith Super Squalo Lampredi-designed three-litre four-cylinder engine, which was the same unit as in the Monza. The original engine does survive though, owned by Southward.

MASERATI RIVALS

The list of Maseratis raced here is long, and their histories are convoluted. Two that stand out are the ones campaigned by top local driver Ross Jensen. The first was the ex–Stirling Moss 1956 NZGP–winning car. This was sold following Moss's victory in this race to 1957 New Zealand Gold Star champion Jensen to replace the Monza Ferrari that he raced previously. Jensen had a great drive to second place in the 1958 NZGP and was also second at Wigram. Along with winning the Ardmore 50, this took him to victory in the 1958 Gold Star Championship. Jensen had a second 250F with a Fantuzzi-designed light-weight and sleek Piccolo body. This car had a very confused history but was the machine that Jensen scored a brilliant win with in the 1958 Bathurst 100.

The only surviving Maserati 250F in New Zealand is the car that Chris Amon cut his racing teeth on in the big time in New Zealand in 1962. This car was long in the tooth at the time, but Amon, showing his supreme talent early, did some amazing things with it. Its history included ownership by Jack Brabham, and it was previously raced by Ken Wharton, Peter Collins, and Mike Hawthorn. Brabham brought it to New Zealand but didn't race it, having an aversion to the car. Local punters including Gavin Quirk and Len Gilbert raced it before Chris Amon. Fortunately, the car was bought by Len Southward and comprehensively restored and remains in the Southward Car Museum collection.

It would be remiss of me not to mention that a number of earlier Maserati single-seaters made their way into the country before the 250Fs. Probably the most notable were the trio of Maserati 8CLT-50s that Freddy Zambucka brought back from Italy. These were constructed to race at Indianapolis in 1950, and were of straight-eight twin-supercharger configuration. They were patently unsuitable for circuit racing and had a fruitless time. As Aussie icon David McKay put it, "About as suitable for airfield racing as the Golden Arrow."

There were others, including a Maserati 6CM and 8CM, imported earlier by Zambucka. They had a modicum of success, the highlight being a victory for Zambucka at Orange in Australia, and later in Tom Clark's ownership, with a good win in the Molesworth Trophy at Ohakea in 1956.

BRITISH OPPOSITION

Many other great cars came to New Zealand to race in the 1950s. Some of these included Jaguar D-Types, Tojeiro Jaguars, Lister Jaguars, Aston Martins, HWMs, Connaughts, Coopers, and Lotuses.

It is important to acknowledge the contribution that all these marques made to the richness of the '50s homegrown racing scene. In the sports car field, a Jaguar D-Type was imported in 1956 and driven successfully by Bob Gibbons. He took fifth place in the 1957 Gold Star series for single-seaters and also won the prestigious Ken Wharton Memorial Sports Car Race at the GP meeting that year. Later, it was driven successfully by Hastings sheep farmer Angus Hyslop. It finished its prime racing period in the hands of Simon Taylor, who also had considerable success with it up until 1963. It seems that this car still resides in New Zealand.

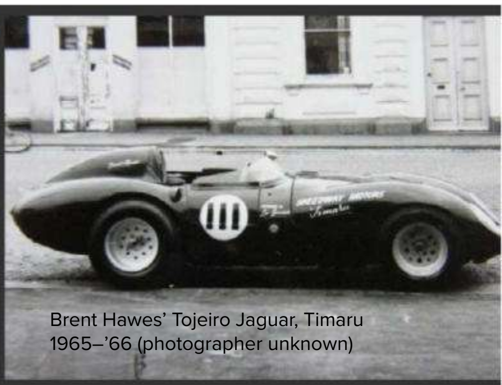
Frank Cantwell imported a Tojeiro Jaguar to New Zealand in around 1957, enjoying considerable success with it and having some memorable battles with Ken Harris in his Monza Ferrari. He also managed to roll it at Teretonga, fortunately without injury. It later went to Arthur Moffat, before enjoying a successful twilight period, being driven hard and well by Timaruvian Brent Hawes.

Small English racing car manufacturers Connaught and HWM (see Simon Taylor's book *John, George and the HWMs* – Ed.) also had a role in the hands of aristocrat Leslie Marr in the Streamliner Connaught in 1956, and Stuart Lewis-Evans in the *monoposto* Connaught version in 1958. Australian Tony Gaze raced HWMs here along with others, before he moved into his Ferrari 500 in 1956. Coopers and Lotus cars moved to the fore by the late 1950s. Their light, nimble format started to undermine the dominance of the front-engine brigade around the turn of the decade.

I'll leave the last word here to erudite Australian iconic racer Lex Davison (four-time Australian GP winner), whose career bridged both eras. Observing the character of his recent Cooper replacement to his previous thoroughbred front-engine Ferrari 500 and Aston Martin, he drolly commented, "The Cooper Climax could more accurately be described as an anti-climax."

> "The Cooper Climax could more accurately be described as an anti-climax" – Lex Davison

Cooper-Climax: more "anti-climax" – Lex Davison


Brent Hawes' Tojeiro Jaguar, Timaru 1965–'66 (photographer unknown)

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BRIT AND EURO CAR SHOW CLOSER?

Supplied draft of New Jaguar Mark VII–IX book by Richard Waugh

A big step was taken by Christchurch Brit and Euro fans recently in Canterbury: an organising group has been formed to look into the viability of a show starting in Canterbury. We also learned, to our surprise, that there are around 70 clubs there catering for these vehicles, as Richard Waugh explains

Dear Editor

On the proposed Canterbury Brit & Euro Classic Car Show, proposals are progressing.

A meeting of many of the 70 British and European car clubs in Canterbury and South Canterbury was held recently at the National Air Force Museum at Wigram.

There was a general agreement to proceed and now an organising group is forming, and sites are being investigated. If you are interested, please contact Richard Waugh on 022 533 9400 or email richard.waugh.rev@gmail.com.

The draft cover for Richard's new book on the big early Jaguars looks like it is going to be a great read, as Richard went on to explain:

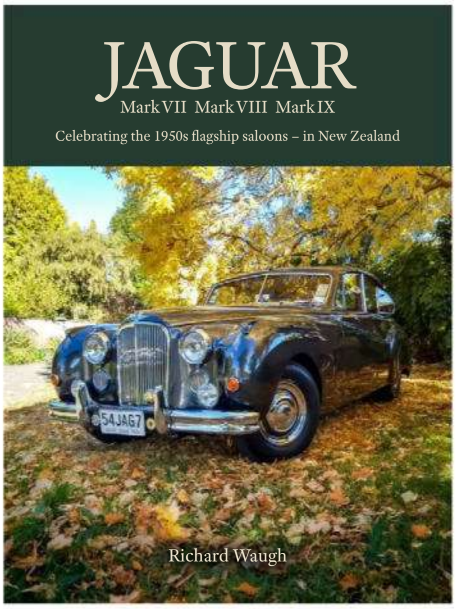
As mentioned, I am continuing to research and write for the new Jaguar Mark VII–IX book. See the draft covers, attached (front page and back page). I am currently firming up on profiling a good range of survivor cars.

Our plan is to have a national event here in Christchurch. So another note in the 2025 magazine calendar would be good: 2–3 November 2025, 75th anniversary of the introduction of the Jaguar Mark VII.

National gathering planned in Christchurch: car displays, dinner, book launch, etc. Contact Richard Waugh on **022 533 9400** or at richard.waugh.rev@gmail.com.

Kind regards

Richard

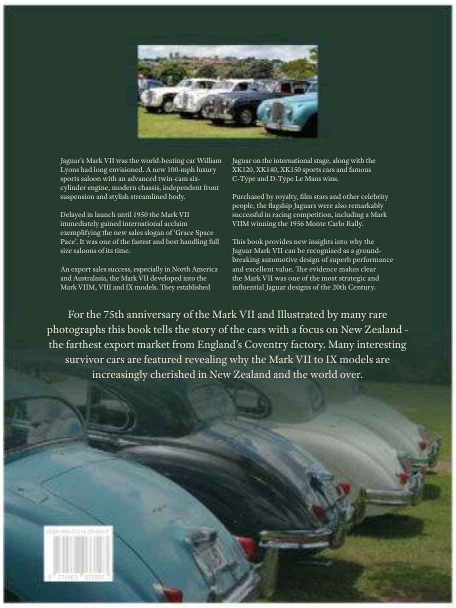


JAGUAR

Mark VII Mark VIII Mark IX

Celebrating the 1950s flagship saloons – in New Zealand

Richard Waugh



Jaguar's Mark VII was the world-beating car William Lyons had long envisioned. A new 100-mph luxury sports saloon with an advanced twin-cam six-cylinder engine, modern chassis, independent front suspension and stylish streamlined body.

Delayed in launch until 1950 the Mark VII immediately gained international acclaim exemplifying the new sales slogan of 'Grace Space Pace'. It was one of the fastest and best handling full size saloons of its time.

An export sales success, especially in North America and Australasia, the Mark VII developed into the Mark VIIM, VIII and IX models. They established Jaguar on the international stage, along with the XK120, XK140, XK150 sports cars and famous C-Type and D-Type Le Mans wins.

Purchased by royalty, film stars and other celebrity people, the flagship Jaguars were also remarkably successful in racing competition, including a Mark VIIM winning the 1956 Monte Carlo Rally.

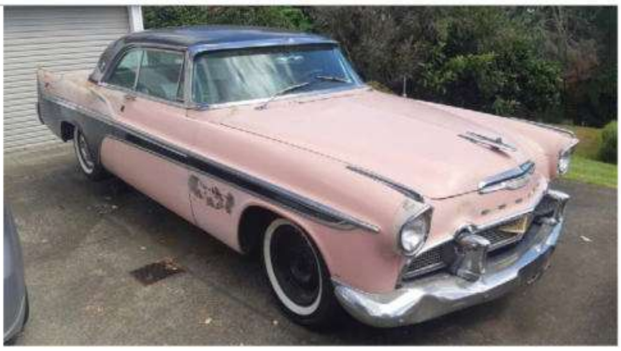
This book provides new insights into why the Jaguar Mark VII can be recognised as a ground-breaking automotive design of superb performance and excellent value. The evidence makes clear the Mark VII was one of the most strategic and influential Jaguar designs of the 20th Century.

For the 75th anniversary of the Mark VII and Illustrated by many rare photographs this book tells the story of the cars with a focus on New Zealand - the farthest export market from England's Coventry factory. Many interesting survivor cars are featured revealing why the Mark VII to IX models are increasingly cherished in New Zealand and the world over.

SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN RESTORATION

Steve Tree has an ambitious project to bring a 1956 DeSoto back to life. It's quite a different car and a two-door, so it should stand out on the show scene, as Steve is looking to keep the colour scheme. The Fireflite also heralded the beginnings of the US muscle car era and was recognised for its good performance and handling by Nascar, which used a convertible version as its official Indianapolis pace car in 1956.

Introduced in 1956, The DeSoto (Chrysler) Fireflite was the model's top trim offering, in an era when Chrysler was just starting to get into fine styling and specialised in two-tone colour finishes. A 330-cubic-inch (ci) (5408cc) 'Hemi' was the standard engine, offering 270bhp (201kW) in two-barrel form with an optional four-barrel version and 295bhp (220kW) – big figures for the day, giving a standing quarter of 10 seconds and a 110mph (177kph). Produced for one year, the Fireflite was replaced by the Adventurer as DeSoto's premium model.



Dear Editor

I am currently restoring a 1956 DeSoto Fireflite which I have owned for two-and-a-half years. It was brought in from California. It is having a full restoration, which is costing me a fortune. Lance Walsh from Freelance Automotive is doing a fantastic job. We have documented every step and progress so far. I'll keep you posted on progress.

Regards

Steve Tree

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ALFA ROMEO
OWNERS CLUB
NEW ZEALAND

GATHERING OF THE ALFISTI!

Alfa Romeo has a long and proud competition history. Put the biggest group of these Italian thoroughbreds together for the first time in Wellington at Labour Weekend under the auspices of the Alfa Romeo Owners Club of New Zealand for the club's 50th Anniversary Festival and you have a recipe for a real treat for the senses

Words and photography by Peter Maxwell

In mid October 2024, more than 100 Alfa Romeos gathered on the Wellington waterfront for the Alfa Romeo Owners Club's (AROC) Shine and Show, certainly the largest single gathering of one-marque Italian cars that the capital city has witnessed.

AROC traces its origins back to September 1974 in Taupō, where the first semi-official gathering took place, attended by five owners. This was followed by a second meeting in New Plymouth in March 1975.

Times have changed. Today, the Alfa club boasts more than 600 paid-up members, many of them husband and wife teams, who collectively own around 450 of the iconic Italian classics. Note that to the 'Alfisti' (Alfa fans), all Alfa Romeos are classics, including those that have just rolled off the showroom floor.

ALFA OWNERSHIP CHALLENGES

Today, AROC offers its members technical support, competition opportunities via the highly competitive Trofeo race series, track days such as Manfeild's May Madness, regular social outings, and emotional counselling where necessary. Italian car maintenance can be mentally challenging but it's not as dire as some might imagine, and enthusiasts love a challenge anyway. And it's all funnelled to the faithful through *AlfaNews*, the club's bi-monthly full-colour 40-page magazine.

FESTA D'ORO TIME

The Festa d'Oro, or Golden Festival, is an annual event located in a different province every year, but this year's occasion marking the club's 50th anniversary was the largest and probably the most significant in its history, with over 200 attendees, including several from Australia. Alfas made their way to Wellington from the furthest regions of the country, many in convoys, others individually negotiating the nation's endless supplies of traffic cones, cameras, pot holes, and camper-vans. In the city itself, navigation was easier, some attendees noted – they had only to cope with the judder bars and the occasional cyclist – but then, hazard avoidance, nimble handling, and accurate steering are what Alfas are designed for.

Sponsored by Gazely Motors, Alfa Romeo New Zealand, The Surgery / Detail Depot, Star Insure, and Bristol Automotive, the five-day Festa began on Thursday, 17 October with a meet and greet at Rydges Hotel.

An Italian *tricolore* of Giulia sedans from the mid 1960s

Classics amid the crowd – a 1750 Berlina from 1970 and a 105 GTV

This was followed the next morning by a tour of the Wairarapa to sample the region's great driving roads and country hospitality. After a substantial lunch at Martinborough's The Runholder vineyard, the teams were cautioned to be back in time for the Friday-evening launch of the club's 50th anniversary book *Half Century, Full Throttle*, a superbly presented and comprehensive 520-page history of AROC and Alfa Romeos in New Zealand. It is reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

ITALIAN STYLE

At the Saturday morning Shine and Show on Wellington's waterfront, Alfas on display ranged from a 1958 Giulietta Sprint, the oldest car at the Festa, to the latest 4C and 505bhp (377kW) Giulia Quadrifoglio. Among the rows of Alfetta, Brera, Giulia, GTV, Alfasud, Sprint, 156, 159, and 916, the standout classics were a trio of 1970s-era Alfa Montreal V8s, all presented in as good as, if not better than, new condition. Lewis and Kerryn Townshend's Montreal took out the major prize of the day.

A number of Alfa race cars were also on display at the Shine and Show, including Phil Hehir's sensational lime-green Montreal (the world's most-raced example), Tom Bruynel's Twin Spark 156, Bruce Stewart's 105 GTV, and a similar road-going model, still owned and driven by Peter Beck, who competed with it in the Wellington Street Races in 1985 and 1988.

For those who fancied a Saturday-afternoon drive, the Kapiti Fun Run circled the Pāuatahanui Inlet, then followed the old rally stage route over the Paekākāriki Hill, the summit of which offers spectacular views of the Kapiti coastline, 220m below.

CELEBRATING ALFISTI

At the gala dinner in Te Papa's foyer, guests were entertained by the glamorous Beat Girls, dressed appropriately in stylish, shimmering, Rosso Red dresses, while others took time out to admire the multi-million-dollar 1930 Alfa Romeo 1750 Gran Sport 6C parked in the entry lobby, courtesy of Southward Car Museum.

Monday's Historic Hillclimb Tour offered a touch of nostalgia for a handful of AROC members, former competitors, and spectators included. Palmer Head is closed to vehicles now, partly overgrown, and with foot-access only, but Alexandra Road, Houghton Bay, and Mount Crawford, or major parts thereof, can still be driven.

Festa d'Oro proved to be a great success, drawing crowds of onlookers to the harbourside, motor sport enthusiasts, and pedestrians alike. The capital turned on some fine and sunny weather to make the Alfas feel at home throughout, meaning that the Alfas could all look their best, and many old friends took the opportunity to reconnect. ■

Introduced in 1970, the Alfa Montreal is powered by a 2.6-litre double-overhead-camshaft (DOHC) dry-sump V8

Note: AROC celebrates not just Alfa Romeos, but all things Italian: food, wine, culture, cars. Lancia, Ferrari, Lamborghini, and Maserati owners are not turned away. You don't have to own an Alfa to become a member either, although you'll probably want to. More than a few members actually own Fiats.

Copies of *Half Century, Full Throttle* can be purchased via AROC's website: **arocnz.org.nz**.

An Alfa 164 followed by a line-up of 916 coupés and 156 sedans

Star of the Issue Poster

PLYMOUTH'S NO-HOLDS-BARRED '70S MUSCLE CAR

1972 Plymouth Cuda TX9 340/4

It's not a nickname! Plymouth proclaimed its no-nonsense muscle car as a 'Cuda' for all its 1970–'74 performance models of the popular Barracuda.

You couldn't get a Cuda with anything less than a 318-cubic-inch (ci) (5211cc) V8. Cuda meant business! Tough, no compromising performance in an era where there was no substitute for cubic inches.

John Carson first saw his TX9 340, four-speed Cuda in 2019, at the Whangamatā Beach Hop. He couldn't believe his eyes when he saw the 'For Sale' sign in its window and phoned its owner.

Unfortunately, he was only interested in swapping for a 1959 Dodge pickup. John had a 2009 SRT8 Challenger, so no deal.

It was six months later and John called the owner again, but this time he was not only agreeable to a sale, but would also hold off on any other offers while John sold his Challenger. Luckily, the Challenger went within a week to its new owner, and John was the proud owner of the triple-black beast.

This was just the start of an intense campaign, in 2020, by John to discover its full history and track down its previous owners.

Its prior New Zealand owner had spent time in Australia with the Cuda and had advertised it for sale before bringing it to New Zealand. Ron Heintschel was one of two people contacted, and he was the car's original owner. He had it restored in 2009, before selling it to a Seal Beach, California doctor. In Ron's hands, this car won 35 Mopar trophies and plaques, while the doctor was unable to find the records of the numerous trophies that he had won with the car.

Ron sent John an old video of the Cuda's restoration, and in reply, John did a Facebook video of a walk around the Cuda for Ron, with the Cuda's engine running.

"I could see tears in Ron's eyes. It was such a magical moment to reunite him with his much-loved Cuda," John says.

John now has a coveted Galen report for his Cuda, documenting its authenticity.

He says, "The things I like about this particular Cuda is that, in its 52 years, not one owner has ever messed with it. It still runs a matching-numbers drivetrain, has never had a panel replacement, and apart from two new seat covers back in 1993, the interior is 100 per cent original ... I love the 340/4 speed combination, as I think every performance or muscle car should be manual!" ∎

starinsure QUICK SPECS

1972 Plymouth Cuda TX9 340/4

Engine	Hemi V8 5572cc (340ci)
Bore/Stroke	102.5mm/84mm
Fuel system	Single four-barrel carburettor
Max. power	240bhp (179kW) at 4800rpm
Max. torque	393Nm at 3600rpm
Transmission	Four-speed manual (three-speed auto available)
Suspension, F/R	Wishbones, torsion bars, and telescopic shock absorbers with stabiliser bar / Solid axle, leaf springs, telescopic shock absorbers
Brake, F/R	Hydraulic-operated and boosted drum / Hydraulic-operated and boosted drum
Weight	1554kg
Length	4740mm
Top speed	201kph
Standing quarter-mile	15.5s

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FUEL INJECTION

KIWI KNOW-HOW

NORTH CAROLINA WIZARDRY

By Quinton Taylor, photography by David O'Connell

As they say, 'it never rains, but it pours', and right when we were putting Jonathan Paape's, Magnificent Three-Way Split Corvette story together for *New Zealand Classic Car* Issue No. 396, David O'Connell sent in a letter with some photos of his quite stunning Chevrolet Corvette C2 Stingray

This car has been the subject of a four-year restoration, a year of which was spent solely working with fibreglass body experts in Auckland. David says that it was a pretty good body to start with and now it is top quality, and he is "very happy" with the result.

We are previewing it here, as it reaches completion. A full feature will follow. David takes up the tale.

"I've been a keen subscriber and reader of your magazine for many years, absolutely love it, particularly the diversity of the cars and people you feature," he says, generously. "I was looking at the back issues page recently in one of the magazines and noticed that one super classic, in my opinion, has not been featured on your cover – at least not since as far back as September 2015 anyway – the iconic C2 Corvette Stingray.

A TOUCH OF KIWI INGENUITY

"I have owned my C2 for around 20-odd years, but at the beginning of the Covid years, a chance meeting with a young local mechanic with immense talent, as it turned out, sparked a dream that I had always harboured. It started us on a four-year restoration pilgrimage,

with a twist. It was a learning experience like no other for both of us.

"With the help of an old chap from North Carolina, US, who handcrafted a one-of-a-kind throttle body inlet manifold for us, we were able to commence the re-creation of a newish version of the 'fuelie' motor that this car once had. It had been tampered with in the '60s, unfortunately. The Rochester injection had been removed, but the fuelie heads remained. It was original in most other ways. The body spent over a year with a super fussy and dedicated team from a well-known Auckland panel and paint company, being completely stripped down and rebuilt beyond factory specs, achieving panel and paint perfection.

THE WHOLE JOB

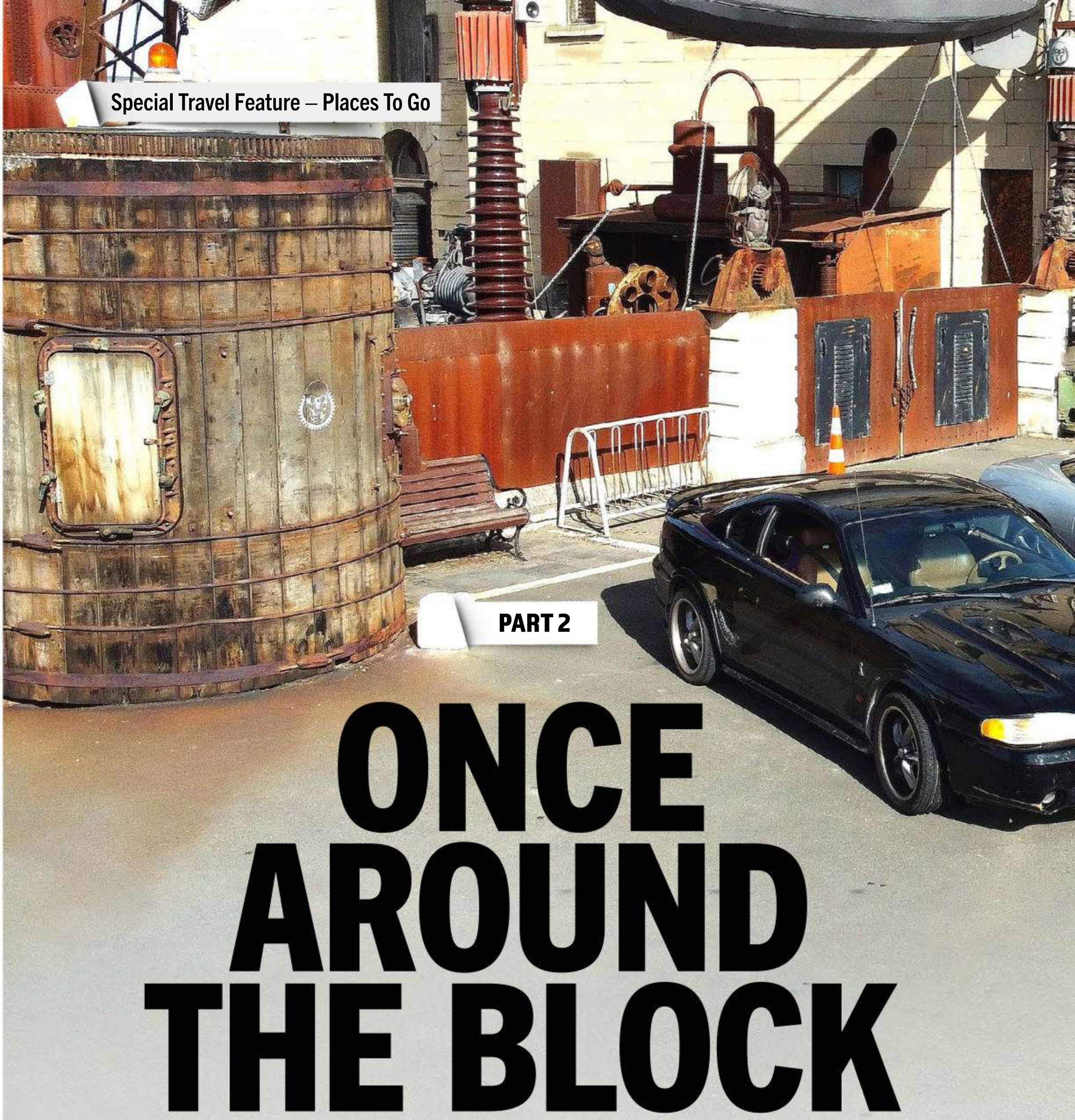
"The rest of the car was also completely restored over four years; a challenging job, as some parts needed replacing. However, thanks to Covid causing the permanent closure of many suppliers internationally, we were forced to be creative and fabricate some replacement parts.

"This Corvette is now testament to good old Kiwi know-how and innovation. The refurbishment involved many talented New Zealand companies and individuals, some of whom really deserve to be publicly acknowledged. The rebuild took place through the Covid lockdown and the back story of a small town local mechanic is, in my opinion, a ripper.

NO PRESSURE

"Anyway, I would love for *New Zealand Classic Car* to feature the Corvette at some stage, as there's a lot of us mad Corvette and American car nuts around, and it would give some well-deserving and talented people who worked on it a great deal of pleasure."

Thank you, David; invitation accepted. ■



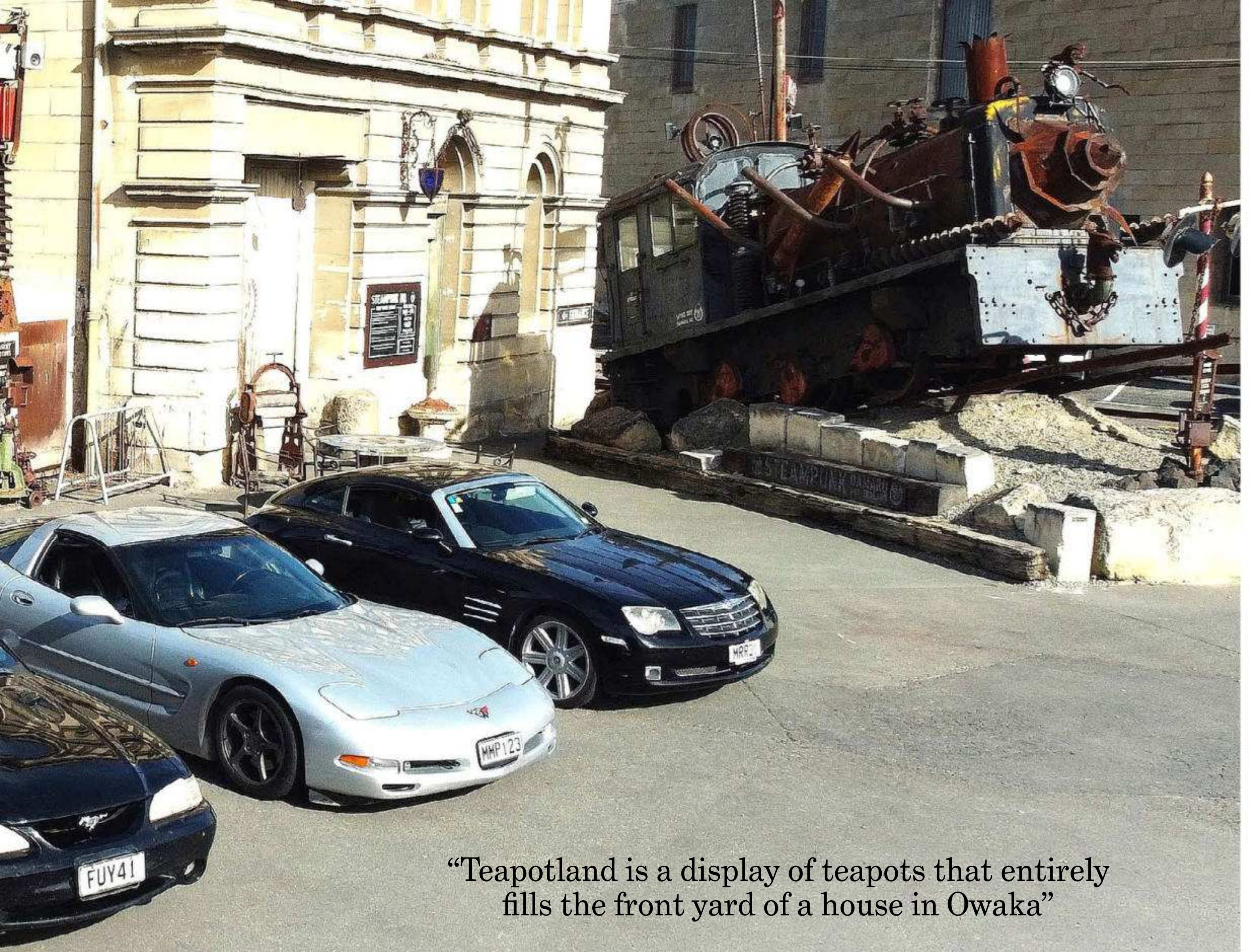
PART 2

ONCE AROUND THE BLOCK

A VERY SMALL SOUTH ISLAND INVASION

Patrick and a couple of mates decided that a tour of the scenic South Island was well overdue, so they set off on a nine-day raid of some of the island's best scenic spots, cosseted in three very different American grand tourers. Part 2 concludes their South Island invasion – Ed.

By Patrick Harlow, photography by Patrick Harlow



“Teapotland is a display of teapots that entirely fills the front yard of a house in Owaka”

SOUTHERN SCENIC ROUTE

Heading through Arthurs Pass via Lake Brunner and the picturesque town of Moana, we travelled along the foot of the Southern Alps on the Inland Scenic Route to Geraldine. Next, it was onto Wānaka and then to Invercargill, a must-stop location. There are way too many beautiful roads in the South Island to rank them. The scenery changed so dramatically from place to place. We had intended to miss the big cities, and, appropriately, the only places where we got lost were in Invercargill and Dunedin. But thanks to cellular technology and a shaken trust in Google GPS, we were able to meet up again.

Fuel stops became a competition to see which car took the least petrol, with the more modern 2004 Chrysler Crossfire 3.2-litre 160kW V6 engine getting the best economy. Surprisingly, the 1998 Cobra SVT Mustang’s 4.6-litre 227kW V8 and the 2000 C5 Corvette’s 5.7-litre 270kW engine delivered very similar figures. Admittedly, these tests were not very scientific and carried out using the back of a paper napkin for reference, but the resultant humour set a tone for the rest of the trip. Meals were a treat, as we sampled the local Southland cuisine such as cheese rolls and blue cod.

Two of the quirkiest places that we visited were Three Creeks and Teapot Land. Three Creeks is a little place that features a lot of 1950s kitsch and memorabilia. Located on State Highway 8 between Geraldine and Wānaka, it boasts a coffee cart set among buildings consisting of an old service station, a blacksmith’s workshop, and a trading store selling collectables and giftware alongside some very solid wooden outdoor furniture.

Teapotland is a display of teapots that entirely fills the front yard of a

house in Owaka. It was started in 2006 and is now an iconic stop for anybody driving through The Catlins. The teapots come from all over New Zealand and the world.

LAKE COUNTRY

Wānaka's National Transport & Toy Museum is possibly one of the biggest museums in New Zealand. Within four large buildings and the largest marquee that I have ever been in are over 600 vehicles, 20 aircraft, and 60,000 vintage and modern toys. The marquee alone houses a jet aeroplane, some military vehicles and an assortment of classic cars and trucks. Most of these items are housed in a higgledy-piggledy order throughout all the buildings. Again by contrast, Invercargill's Bill Richardson Transport World is very tidy and orderly, with most objects being set out in a thematic order and some full-scale dioramas created for good measure.

Between Wānaka and Invercargill is the little town of Lumsden, which is where New Zealand's biggest bank robbery occurred just over 40 years ago on St Patrick's Day. The BNZ was robbed of $107K ($500K in today's money). Two men wearing motorcycle helmets walked into the Lumsden bank demanding cash and got away on a motorbike.

Police found a bag with two helmets, a wig, a rifle, and ammunition. The pair were identified by a fingerprint found on the helmet. Alistar Bar was later captured, but not before he had shot his partner in crime, Gibson Grace. Since then, the bank became known as the 'Route 6 Café and Bar' with décor that celebrated US Route 66, the '50s, and automobilia. Unfortunately, when we arrived, the owner had been elected as the Mayor of Southland and the business was closed. Hopefully, it will open again under new management. (It is indeed back open and a favourite stop for car clubs and great food – Ed.).

We spent an entire day in Invercargill looking at the Bill Richardson Transport World, E Hayes hardware store, and Classic Motorcycle Mecca museums. E Hayes is a clever mixture of shop and transport museum, where collectables, hardware, and home accessories share space with vintage motorbikes, cars, and Burt Munro memorabilia. Burt Munro, thanks to the movie *The World's Fastest Indian*, features prominently in the town, but in Classic Motorcycle Mecca, he shares space with six-time world speedway champion Ivan Mauger. The top two storeys of this

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Burt's other bike

MAJESTIC THEATRE

"We spent an entire day in Invercargill looking at the Bill Richardson Transport World, E Hayes hardware store, and Classic Motorcycle Mecca museums"

E. HAYES & SONS

amazing museum feature enough classic and vintage motorcycles to please any enthusiast. In the basement, another famous Southland motoring legend is remembered. In what is called the 'Bunker', there are several racing cars built by George Begg. Most are still owned by private individuals and regularly raced.

SOUTH'S BEST KEPT SECRET – THE CATLINS

Heading back north via The Catlins, Oamaru and the Steampunk HQ beckoned. We were distracted, however, by the beauty of driving through The Catlins and discovering the Whistling Frog Café and Bar, literally in the sticks and next to a camping ground. It is not far from the Cathedral Caves and spectacular McLean Falls and is a great place for a break.

It was between Oamaru and Rakaia that we encountered the most traffic, but after tuning left just after crossing this country's longest bridge (2.4km long), once again we had the roads to ourselves as we took the inland roads to Amberley, bypassing Christchurch. After Amberley, it was a quick jump into Hanmer, followed by an amazing drive through the back roads to Kaikōura where we spent last night. For our last meal in the South Island, we dined at a Groper Garage restaurant. Here we discussed our South Island invasion and declared its roads to be well and truly conquered. With the South Island done, we now turned our eyes to the north and home. ∎

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Unrestored 1960 Pontiac Bonneville next to Lindsay and Keri Divett's 1939 DeSoto coupé – Best in Show winner

Dean Hollobon's 1965 Jaguar E-Type FHC (rear) won the Best British trophy

SOUTH'S CLASSICS SHOWCASED

Taking Care of Pigment Dunedin Autospectacular 2024

Words and photography by Quinton Taylor

1977 XC Panel Van
OPER TRIBUTE
SD6100
Dave Dougherty's stunning 1977 Ford Falcon XC panel van restoration, a tribute to Alice Cooper, scooped the Best Australian award (see the feature elsewhere in this issue – Ed.)

Cool '65 VW comes with 1600cc motivation

H PACIFIC Packard
The Duncan family's 1929 Cadillac took the Best American award

CHEVROLET
Bel Air Sport Coupe
NFL219
Southland Chevrolet Club Jeff and Alvena Helm's quite outstanding '55 Bel Air is the result of many years of work

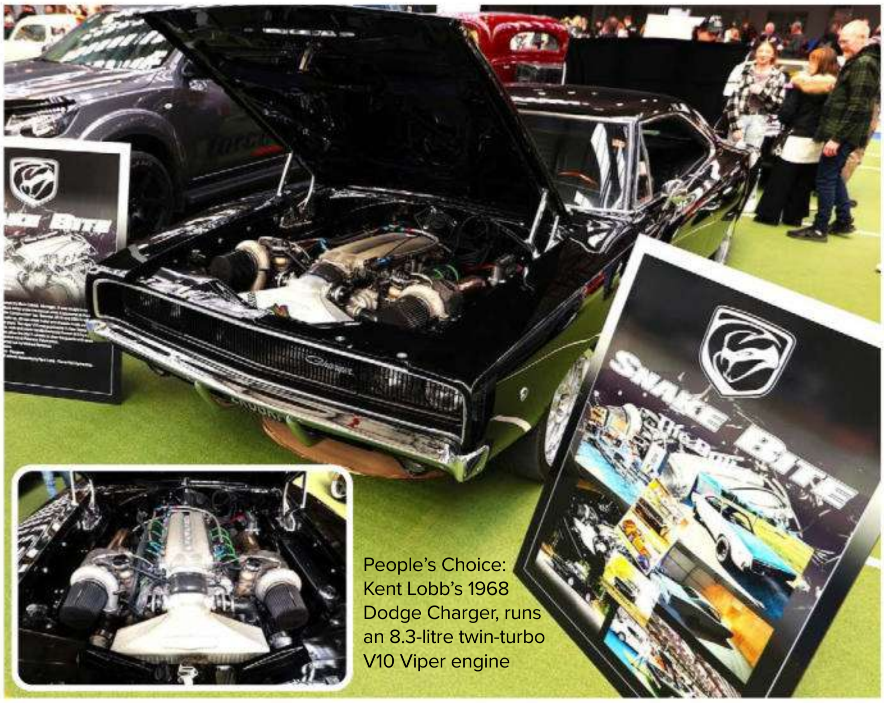
Tattooist sponsor Taking Care of Pigment made for eye-catching naming rights at this year's annual Dunedin Autospectacular. Again, the show didn't disappoint, celebrating milestones including the Ford Mustang's 60th, 110 years of Dodge, and 100 years of MG.

Held indoors this year at the Edgar Centre on Dunedin's waterfront on Saturday, 19 October, it enjoyed great support from the public, enthusiasts, and businesses around the South Island. As expected, the quality of preparation for the exhibits was to a very impressive standard.

Organised by the Otago Classic Motoring Club and the Otago Early Falcon & Fairlane Car Club, 13 September is the date for 2025.

No matter the weather outside, the family-orientated event always attracts big crowds to the trade stalls and a café, while this year, a new event was the Kids' Toyspectacular. Each show has a theme, and this year it was weddings. The Vintage Austin Register took the honours for best club display on the theme.

Austin-Healeys appeared in force, with some cars under restoration and others with lots of New Zealand motoring racing history. Dunedin's Ross Osborne is now the national Austin-Healey register coordinator. He is intrigued by the recent interest in the marque, especially with Russell Lane and

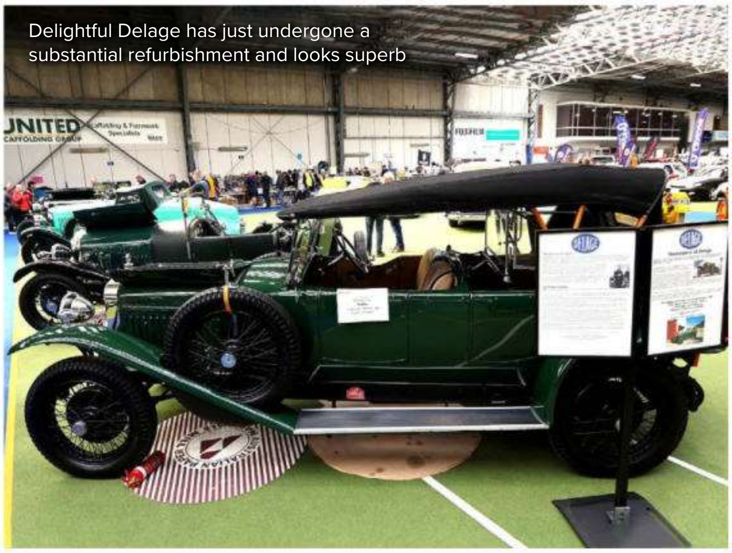

People's Choice: Kent Lobb's 1968 Dodge Charger, runs an 8.3-litre twin-turbo V10 Viper engine

Best Kids' Toyspectacular, Jacob and Mathew Henry

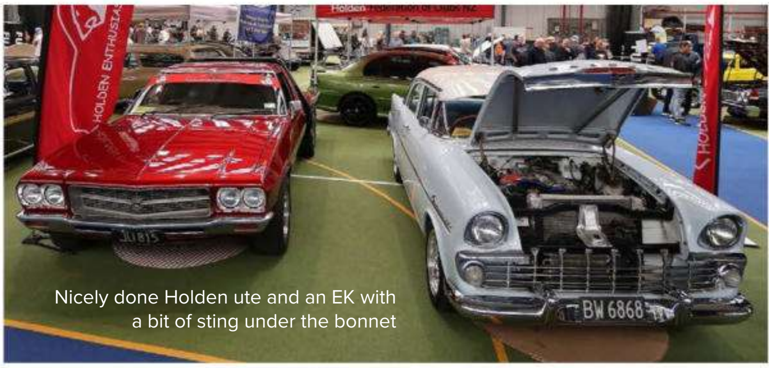
Otago Early Falcon & Fairlane Car Club display with Ford Fairlane Custom, left, and Falcon XW GT

Best Club Display for the wedding theme went to the Vintage Austin Register

Barbara Sowman's Mitsubishi Galant GTO won Best Japanese


Delightful Delage has just undergone a substantial refurbishment and looks superb

Rare Fiat 1100 looking as new on Otago Classic Motoring site



Nicely done Holden ute and an EK with a bit of sting under the bonnet

Not so long ago, it used to be model train displays. Now it's earthmoving equipment models

Owned by legendary New Zealand racing driver Sybil Lupp, her modified V12 Jaguar survives in pristine condition

friends rebuilding a handful of these British sports cars in Christchurch, as reported in *New Zealand Classic Car* Issue No. 395.

Trevor Bills from Christchurch's Autohaven Museum is a firm supporter of the event and again displayed a glittering array of his vintage classics in the Packard area, organised by Tony Devereaux.

Appropriately, celebrating 110 years of Dodge, this year's Best in Show went to the eye-catching 1939 DeSoto coupé of Lindsay and Keri Divett. Kent Lobb made something of a jaw-dropping statement and scooped the People's Choice award with his 1968 Dodge Charger, 'Snake Bite', rejuvenated with a twin-turbo Dodge Viper 8.3-litre V10 filling the engine bay.

Parts stalls, die-cast models, the spectacular children's model competition, and a large model earthmoving display meant something for everyone and every age. ■

1964 Austin-Healey BJ8 MkIII – Cliff Lloyd's magnificent long-term restoration, back to its true colour of Healey Blue

1955 Austin-Healey 100S – one of 50 cars built, it was sold in Invercargill by Austin agent PH Vickery Ltd. Raced by Barney Giller at the first Southland Road Race (Ryal Bush) in 1956, it was further raced by 'Cobber' Hurley and Grady Thomson before being written off in 1967. This accurate 1991 re-creation by Australian Steve Pike spent some time in Europe before returning to ex-Timaru's Alister Rayner. It now resides in Burleigh Heads, Queensland

The red 1955 Austin-Healey 100S and black 100S displayed at Dunedin were the only 100S models bought new that year, and sold within days of each other in 1955. Both Healeys raced at Ryal Bush in Southland. As displayed here, this is the first time in 50 years that the cars have been together

Auckland Austin dealer Seabrook Fowlds sold this 1955 Austin-Healey 100S to Ross Jensen, replacing his 100/4. Jensen went on to record numerous wins in this car, which had further success in the hands of other owners. Bought by the Grant family in the 1970s, it has been carefully refurbished and regularly competes in classic events

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Settrington Cup at the 2024 Goodwood Revival (photo: PA Media)

NOT YOUR AVERAGE J40 PEDAL CAR

By Greg Price, photography by Greg Price and the Goodwood Committee

Many youngsters in the 1950s, myself included, longed for one of these, but they were few and far between, primarily because they were expensive

It would often be much later in life that the youngsters who fervently dreamt of owning one of these pedal cars could realise their dreams, even though few could now fit in them. Today, these iconic pedal cars for boys and girls are celebrated in a highly competitive race at the annual Goodwood Revival. With its own trophy, the Settrington Cup, the race is run along the pit straight. You can see the world's cutest car race on YouTube, this year celebrating 75 years of the J40.

My family's car though – pictured on the facing page – is a little bit different. It is not one of your average, run-of-the-mill spot-welded examples based on the 1948 Austin A40 Devon, produced by the Austin Motor Company Limited.

WORK FOR THE DISABLED

All J40s were manufactured in Bargoed, South Wales, at a specially constructed factory, which opened in 1949. This business existed purely for the employment of disabled coal miners after injury. Initially, it made Pathfinder racing cars based on the Austin 7, but switched to the Austin J40 late in 1949.

Early examples were made from two or three metal panels stitch-welded together. However, because they were made from actual 18-gauge-steel car-panel offcuts, these early pedal cars were very heavy. Standard features included working headlights and horn (Lucas Junior, made specifically for this pedal car), detachable wheels with Dunlop tyres, a realistic facia panel, and tuck-and-roll seating made from the same material used in the Devon.

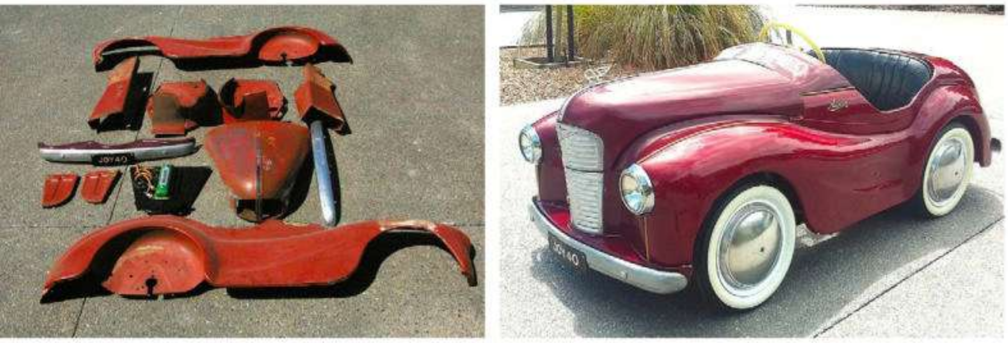
Each car had an opening bonnet and boot, chrome bumpers, hubcaps, grille, and boot handle, and a slightly offset steering wheel to allow for an extra kiddie to ride along.

In the early stages of development, a couple of prototypes were made by bolting multiple separate panels together, as in this car, after which most production models were spot-welded. This bolted pedal car does not, and never has had, a horn button in the steering wheel. Also, it originally had Austin 10 van interior lights fitted as headlamps, as were fitted to one of the first prototypes.

CONSULTING THE ORACLE

A well-known J40 owner in the UK, one David Whyley, penned what has become

The Goodwood Revival Settrington Cup is always highly competitive (photo: PA Media)



Left: Simple pressed-steel panels awaiting restoration. Right: Built to last – the Bargoed Austin J40

an authoritative bible on them, entitled *The Austin Pedal Car Story*. He claimed that "all production pedal cars were spot-welded". This appears not to be the case, as my research would suggest that there is in fact a small number of bolt-together examples surviving but mainly in other countries.

RARE AS, IN INVERCARGILL

Unfortunately, there are no records that would indicate exactly how many bolt-together examples were made, but the number is seemingly quite small. To date, I have located only four others worldwide, and this one is the oldest.

In total, 32,098 Austin J40 pedal cars were made before production ceased in September 1971. The cars were shipped around the world. The body number on our example is 3240. We know that it was sold new in Invercargill in 1950, which equates to the reconstituted production numbers.

Apparently, our car should have the letters 'JR' stamped next to the number in the boot, but there is no information as to why these might be missing. Given that our example has neither a 'JR' nor even a 'J' stamped next to the number, it is possible that the stamp's inclusion simply depended on the mood of the miner operating the numbering system at the time.

LUCKY WINDOW SHOPPING

Our car was subsequently passed on to the brother of the original owner in 1992, and finished up in Nightcaps, where it was purchased by a Dunedin second-hand dealer during a cold-calling buying trip in 2000. Just prior to Easter in April 2000, Karen spotted this Austin J40 in the window of that second-hand shop, from whence we bought it. Getting it home involved 16 hours of driving, swapping between our car and a rental. Over the next couple of years, I carried out some of the required restoration, albeit haphazardly.

"The earliest known survivor of the bolt-together J40s"

EARLIEST KNOWN SURVIVOR

In 2001, the then-secretary of the UK-based Austin J40 Pedal Car Club posted photos of our car on its website with the comment that "it was the earliest known survivor of the bolt-together J40s". Disassembly produced at least 21 separate panels and parts, together with more than 150 individual nuts and bolts, screws and the like.

While I started with the best of intentions, I stalled along the way, and then we had 15,000-plus earthquakes … Fortunately, with everything either packed away in boxes or tied to the garage rafters, there was only minimal damage to the panels and to some of my nice new painted bits. I had taken lots of photos, which made putting it all back together again a bit easier.

ASSEMBLY BEGINS (FINALLY)

The beginning of October 2020 saw me dust off all the parts, some of which I had previously restored and painted back in 2004, and the pre-restoration assembly was tackled with nice new nuts and bolts.

Thanks to the environmental protection authorities' (with the emphasis on 'mental'), world-wide restrictions on paint composition, the process for mixing the paint back in 2004 was not allowed to be used in 2020, so there was an ever-so-slight difference between the 2004 and 2020 colours. It actually didn't matter, as the original colour was applied to the centre panels and the newer paint to the outer panels, resulting in a very slight two-tone effect, separated by some vintage tan-coloured fender weld!

My practice of sanding down the completed panels with 1200 wet 'n' dry, followed by an application of some CRC RE-PO Extra Cut, gives an old-but-new-looking finish, befitting for what is now a 74-year-old classic and very special pedal car!

Years ago, a rich school chum had one that his mum would only let me look at from the gateway of his drive. Now, all these years later, we finally have our own J40 – but I'm too big for it. ■

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MG CLASSIC A CRACKER

By Quinton Taylor, photography by Aaron Mai

A great turnout of beautifully prepared cars arrived for the MG Classic at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon, on 8 November, for some entertaining racing. Aaron Mai was on hand to capture some of those moments

Notable at this year's MG Classic – apart from the quality of the big fields – was the return of some famous cars from the past. Classic motor racing has returned with a vengeance, if the MG Classic is anything to judge by.

Categories included Formula 5000, Sports Racing, Formula Libre, Sports Sedans (22 cars), Sybil Lupp Invitational – won by Robbie Halliday in his Ford Escort, Heritage Touring Cars (25 cars), Touring Car Masters and NZ6s, Formula First, Historic and Vintage, Historic Muscle, Classic 1 and 2 (35 cars), Historic Single Seaters, Formula Fords (35 cars), Pre-65s, and Super Mini Challenge.

HVRA NEWCOMERS

A big field of 25 HVRA members turned out for the MG Classic. Coordinator Bruce Dyer was delighted.

"HVRA – Historic & Vintage Racing Association – members were thrilled to be invited by the MG Car Club to attend the 38th running of the MG Classic," Bruce said.

"For our first time at the MG Classic, 25 members supported the event from all corners of the North Island.

"We had nine new entrants in our group enter, which was very pleasing –

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including Bryan Ashworth, in his 1962 Daimler SP250, from Christchurch."

TARMAC TIME

Friday was test day, and for some there were a few mishaps. Richard McCarthy suffered a suspension failure and he withdrew his 1970 Lotus Seven S4 from the event. Elliott Frame in the lovely Alan Mann–tribute Ford Escort suffered a mechanical issue in the Historic Muscle & Saloon Cars (HMSC) race, which was a blinder, and withdrew as well. The little car showed its potential and will be one to watch.

TIME TO GET SERIOUS

Saturday was a qualifying and race day; sadly, rain shortened things on Sunday. Qualifying went without incident for a large pack of Ford Escorts. Leading was Shane Murland, Andrew Nugent, Dennis McConnell, Roger Williams, and Warwick Mortimer in their Mk1 Escort BDGs, all in the 1.17s to 1.21s bracket.

SATURDAY – RACE ONE

A rolling-start scratch race, based on qualifying times. Shane led the race, followed by a host of Escorts and Jonathan Hogg in the BMW CSL.

There were some great battles back in the field, with Craig Sawyer's Coke Viva and Todd Murphy's Odlins Fiat recreating racing from back in the period.

Bryan in the SP250 had a great battle with Bevan Wright in his Morris Mini, passing him on the last lap.

SUNDAY – RACE TWO

Race two was a handicap race, meaning the back markers had to work to get a result, said Bruce. Andrew Nugent pulled out the quickest time of 1.16s, reversing the dominance of Shane in the first race. Roger Williams was going well until the Escort diff cried enough and Poul Christie, and Oliver Sentch, both Escort Mk1s, also suffered gremlins. A clean race.

Keith Tunnicliffe took the honours in the ex-Cook Datsun 160J, with Derek Cecil (Escort Mk2) closing fast for a well-deserved second.

A great finish, became the last of the day, and the weekend, due to heavy rain. Officials made the right call to finish the meeting, Bruce said.

"We wish to thank the MG Racing Club; MSNZ [MotorSport New Zealand] race officials; volunteer 'flaggies'; grid and safety marshals; Manawatu Car Club; Manfeild; and our own people – Mike, David, and Dennis, and our drivers. A great show, and we hope to be back next year."

For a look back at the history of Formula 5000, and a further MG Classic roundup, go to Michael Clark's Motor Sport Flashback on page 68 in this issue.

Special Report

BRENDON'S CHAMPION EFFORT

By Quinton Taylor, photograph supplied

Southland car builders/restorers/racers Barry and Marguerite Leitch had a lot to celebrate on 17 November, as their son, Brendon (28), and his Liepert Motorsport co-driver, Anthony McIntosh, drove their Lamborghini Huracan to victory in the Super Trofeo World Pro-Am finals in Jerez, Spain. The crew had scored a third the week before at Bathurst, Brendon's first time at The Mountain. Brendon learnt his mechanical skills working in his father's workshop, and it looks like the hours of go-karting paid off as well. From all of us here at Rusty Media, a big well done!

2024 SOUTHERN MUSTER, 45TH MUSTANG CONVENTION

By Quinton Taylor

The big Southern Muster took place at Invercargill over the weekend 18–20 October 2024, with every model from 1964 to the latest electric version represented. It was a chance for Ford Mustang owners from around the country to celebrate 60 years of the Mustang, and they answered the call.

"We had 157 cars in the show," said Southern Mustang Owners Club president Mark Reidie.

Participants enjoyed a host of activities, and the crowds flocked to ILT Stadium Southland for a well-attended public car show on the Saturday.

Mark said that a record 2000 people attended the convention, which was last held in Invercargill some 12 years ago.

Craig Borland and Diana Bang's 1969 Ford 429 Mustang took the People's Choice award for the Auckland Mustang Club.

The impressive Shelby GT500KR of Penny and Peter Murray, built by Matamata Panelworks and unveiled in July this year, won the Entrants' Choice award. The Shelby GT500KR was *New Zealand Classic Car*'s first poster car of 2024, featured in our September–October edition, Issue No. 395.

A very special car was Garry Jackson's 1964 ½ Mustang Coupe, one of 22,000 sold.

Craig Borland and Diana Bang's 1969 Ford 429 Mustang, Restomod People's Choice Award (photo: Vanessa Adcock)

1964 260-cubic-inch (4260cc) V8 Mustang of Garry Jackson, one of 22,000 sold in 1964 (photo: Vanessa Adcock)

Entrants' Choice award went to Penny and Peter Murray's 'EVILKR' – Shelby GT500KR (photo: Sheryl Kennedy)

ITALIANS GATHER IN KAIKŌURA

Words and photos by Ben Selby

Kaikōura played host to a gathering of many members of New Zealand's Fiat 124 community over the Christchurch Show weekend in November. Organised by passionate Fiat owners Lyn Parlane and Ingrid Adams, the Fiat 124 Riunione is a biennial event which brings together owners of classic Fiat 124 coupés, sedans, and spiders from around New Zealand to celebrate the anniversary of the first production Fiat 124, which was released in 1966.

The festivities this year started on Kaikōura's Esplanade outside the Sudima Hotel, where 35 cars, including a 124 AC coupés, several 124 BC and CC coupés, classic spiders, and modern Abarth 124 spiders were looking their best for the biennial show and shine. People also popped the boot of their 124s to show their boot displays, which were judged by popular vote. The convoy then travelled to Mt Lyford Lodge for lunch before returning to Kaikōura.

Best in Show went to a simply immaculately restored 124 BC coupé owned by Christchurch's Eion Greig. The result of a nine-year restoration process, Greig's BC was a worthy winner.

The next Fiat 124 Riunione will take place in 2026, in Napier.

Eion Greig's Fiat 124 BC coupé, Best in Show at the 2024 Fiat 124 Spider and Coupe 50 Anniversario and Riunione in Kaikōura

Owner of *New Zealand Classic Car* Issue No. 384 cover car for December 2022, a Chrysler Valiant E49 Charger Brendon Beyers catching up with friends

MOPARS IN GORE 2024

Words and photography by Quinton Taylor

It might look rough and just out of lengthy storage, but it fired up and they drove it away

Matching numbers on this impressive 340-cubic-inch (5572cc) '72 Cuda

Plymouth, Dodge, DeSoto, Chrysler Valiant, and Hillman Hunter were just some of the badges spotted as Mopar owners converged in record numbers on Gore at Labour Weekend. Host club Mopars in the South made up by far the largest contingent, in excess of 60 cars from the Gore area. If Chrysler is your favourite, then there was a great array of models, with even an occasional English Chrysler example in the line-up for Saturday's show.

Organising committee spokesperson Sarah Arnold said there were 203 cars registered for the event, but well over that number turned up for the start of the rally and the 170km of touring through to Riversdale and around the Hokonui area, with packed lunches provided.

The Gore A&P Showgrounds was the venue for the Sunday public display and drew a big crowd. A couple of weeks earlier, a contingent of Chrysler Valiant Charger owners toured through The Catlins, and this helped boost the healthy numbers of this memorable Aussie at the Gore weekend. Oamaru in 2025!

CLASSIC CARS IN THE DIGITAL DOMAIN

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Every week, we upload new content from our 35 years of article archives onto our *New Zealand Classic Car* magazine website. Some uploads of the past few weeks include:

FREE TO READ

1968 Escort 1100: Ford's adaptable Escort hugely boosted the tuning industry, and race and rally enthusiasts

https://classiccar.co.nz/escort-services-1968-escort-1100-restomod/

FREE TO READ

Put several rings around it: A South African expat just loves his DKWs, and has plenty of them

https://classiccar.co.nz/put-a-ring-around-that/

FREE TO READ

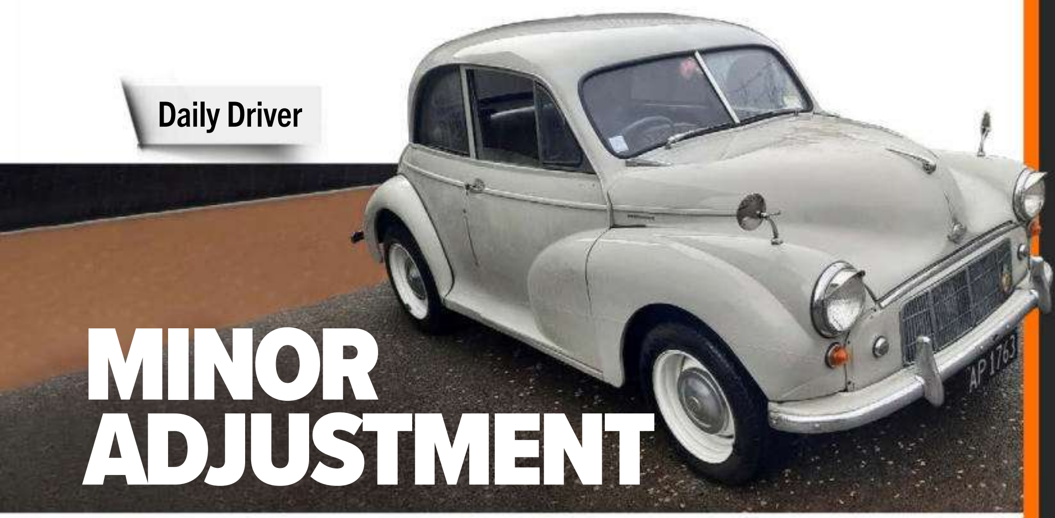
Revolutionary Suzuki Rotary: A rotary-engined Suzuki motorbike! One Kiwi fan has a brace of them

https://classiccar.co.nz/1975-suzuki-re5/

FREE TO READ

Starring the Sandman: This Holden Sandman is more than just a TV star to its owner

https://classiccar.co.nz/westside-story/



MINOR ADJUSTMENT

Words and photography by Patrick Harlow

Despite being just in his 20s, Christchurch-based Ben Skinner has already amassed several projects. Scattered around his father's garage are a few classic motorcycles and a 1983 Honda Civic in various states of repair or restoration, awaiting parts or parts sourcing.

Whenever it is too wet to ride his motorbike, Ben's car of choice is his 1954 split-window Morris Minor.

He first saw one at the age of 14 while walking home from school. Its quirky old-English styling appealed to him immediately, and he decided that he had to have one. Thanks to contacts provided by a friend, he purchased one within a couple of years. The fact that he was too young to drive the car was a trifling issue.

The car was road-legal and, while waiting for his 16th birthday, Ben tidied it up between work on his other projects with a bit of help from his dad. Once he had his restricted licence, Ben regularly drove to school, his Morrie being easily the most unique car in the car park.

TIMELY LESSON

Throughout his ownership, Ben, now in his 20s, has maintained and repaired the car himself, including building its hybrid engine out of the original engine and a spare engine, after he melted a piston. The only time that he has taken the car to a mechanic is because he was not sure how to do the engine timing. Unfortunately, the mechanic timed it wrongly, so Ben taught himself how to do it. He insists that the car is now reliable, although it has taken that mentioned melted piston, three head gaskets, and a shattered first gear to get there.

The car has been on many adventures, including getting stuck in the mud on the school fields, and blowing a head gasket while camping in Nelson with his family. On that occasion, the AA towed him to a small nearby town, where a local mechanic kindly stored the car until they had finished their camping trip and arranged to pick it up.

Ben has also restored all the upholstery, and his next big job is to give the car a new coat of paint. Having learned that not even going to professionals guarantees good results, he has decided to back himself again. He reckons that it will turn out fine. Sensibly, he has already practised on his father's car and that turned out pretty good. ∎

COMING UP IN ISSUE 398

A lot has changed in this issue of *New Zealand Classic Car*, meaning that we have few promised features to catch up on in Issue No. 398.

We take a look at a very nice restomod job done on a Vauxhall Chevette, a tribute to the owner's university days, and we feature his wife's very tidy Chevrolet pickup with matching '70s caravan.

We finally get to the Leyland Mini Traveller that we promised, then over to a big green American '67 Camaro, beautifully restored some years ago and still winning trophies at the Cromwell Classic Car & Hot Rod Festival.

We look into the intricate world of repairing expensive GT and classic steering wheels with Outram specialist Gary McNeill and see some of the magic that he works on the really bad ones.

There's an interesting feature on a very special Holden sports car, that Patrick gets to grips with, and Ian takes a look at MG, its illustrious past and its new sports car.

We have an Italian special, with Ben reporting his experience with what he judged as the top Fiat 124 coupé at the recent Fiat 124 nationals in Kaikōura.

Plenty of our usual columns too, including Jonathan Paape looking at the recent Ferrari tour through New Zealand, while Mal McKee takes us on his tour through Europe in a Porsche 930.

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		1 New Year's Day	2 Day after New Year's Day	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Wellington Anniversary Day	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Auckland Anniversary Day Northland Anniversary Day MAGAZINE Shed ON SALE TODAY	28	29	30	31		

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OWNER:JULIE KELLY

February 2025

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					1	2
3 Nelson Anniversary Day	4	5	6 Waitangi Day	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Classic Car ON SALE TODAY	25	26	27	28		

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REVIVAL 1961 FERRARI 250GT SWB COMPETIZIONE

OWNER: RICHARD ABBOTT

March 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
31					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Taranaki Anniversary Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Otago Anniversary Day Shed ON SALE TODAY	25	26	27	28	29	30

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1966 SINGER VOGUÉ
OWNER: SAMUEL SHORTALL

April 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	1 Southland Anniversary Day	2	3	4	5	6 Daylight Saving ends
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Classic Car ON SALE TODAY	15	16	17	18 Good Friday	19	20 Easter Sunday
21 Easter Monday	22	23	24	25 Anzac Day	26	27
28	29	30				

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ML 1940
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1940 FORD PICKUP)
OWNERS: JIM AND DAPHNE LEDGERWOOD

May 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Mother's Day
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Shed ON SALE TODAY	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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1996 TOYOTA SUPRARZ SERIES 2
OWNER: NEERAJ LALA

June 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
30						1
2 King's Birthday	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 Matariki	21	22
23 Classic Car ON SALE TODAY	24	25	26	27	28	29

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MS WILD
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1951 ALLARD P1
OWNERS: DAN AND DONNA THOMPSON

July 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Shed ON SALE TODAY	29	30	31			

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2004 CHEVROLET CORVETTE C5-Z06
OWNER: ADRIAN DR ORMSBY

August 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Classic Car ON SALE TODAY	26	27	28	29	30	31

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172
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A RE-CREATION OF THE FAMOUS 'MORRARI' NZ MOTOR RACING ICON
OWNERS: MARK AND GREG STOKES

September 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Father's Day
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 South Canterbury Anniversary Day Shed ON SALE TODAY	23	24	25	26	27	28 Daylight Saving starts
29	30					

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1985 CITROEN 2CV6 CHARLESTON
OWNER: KERRY BOWMAN

October 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Classic Car ON SALE TODAY	21	22	23	24 Hawke's Bay Anniversary Day	25	26
27 Labour Day	28	29	30	31		

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A REPLICA MARK 1 FORD ESCORT TWIN-CAM
OWNER: NIGEL PURDIE

November 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
					1	2
3 Marlborough Anniversary Day	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Canterbury Anniversary Day	15	16
17 Shed ON SALE TODAY	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

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GAELIC OLD SMUGGLE WHISKY
RESTAURANT
CARDRONA RESTAURANT AND BAR
RE3856
EUF721
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1963 MERCURY COMET
OWNERS: GLENYS AND BARRY MORGAN

December 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 Chatham Islands Anniversary Day Westland Anniversary Day	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Classic Car ON SALE TODAY	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day	27	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve				

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1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
30		30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
31		31		31		31	31		31		31

2025

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2025 Calendar

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Jeep
RAM

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